Vol. V., Nos. 7-8. OCT.—NOV., 1915.

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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

A Monthly Magazine to maintain the cause of TRUTH, FREEDOM, and PROGRESS in the Church of England.

"By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance."—*Erasmus.*

"A State without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation."—*Edmund Burke.*

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Printer and Publisher: WILLIAM PARR, Knaresborough.

London Agents:—WILLIAMS & NORGATE, 14, Henrietta Street, W.C.
ELLIOT STOCK, 7, Paternoster Row, E.C.

Price 1/- net Annual Subscription 5/- (including postage).

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"THE MODERN CHURCHMAN."

***The Modern Churchman*, the monthly organ of the Churchmen's Union, is sent *free* to all full members of the Union, and to non-members at a charge of 5/- per annum.**

Editor:—Rev. H. D. A. MAJOR, M.A., Copgrove Rectory, Burton Leonard, Harrogate, to whom all literary contributions are to be sent.

Business Manager:—Rev. C. MOXON, M.A., Marske Rectory, Richmond, Yorkshire, receives all subscriptions, advts., changes of address, &c., for the *Modern Churchman*.

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The Modern Churchman.

No. 7. OCTOBER, 1915. Vol. V.

THE RUGBY CONFERENCE.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

By Professor Percy Gardner, Litt. D., LL.D., F.B.A., President of the Churchmen's Union.

At the time of our last Conference at Ripon we were all unconsciously on the verge of the terrible war which has since devastated Europe, and filled us all with the bitterest anxiety. Many of us have lost friends and relatives; all of us feel that the future of our country is in grave peril. If we meet, it is not because we wish to go on as if the war did not exist. But we are not able personally to take part in military duty, and we feel that such a time as the present, when all the principles of our lives, the very foundations of religion and ethics, are called in question, and tested in the fire, is a time when we should meet to reconsider those principles, to see whether they are able to stand the strain of changed conditions, to examine whether we have anything to contribute to the reconstruction which must follow the terrible shocks, in which all things that are easily shaken are likely to perish.

After the war there is going to be a very difficult time. I am not speaking of economic distress or of labour troubles, but of religious thought and conduct. There is a great danger on our right, and a great danger on our left. On the right is the danger of reaction. Liberalism in religious thought and thoroughgoing criticism of the Bible and Christian history have been in the past closely connected with Germany. It is not to be denied that Germany has led the way towards a philosophic conception of the Christian religion, and an exact

and scientific study of the Christian documents. In the violent revolt against German influence which must needs take place in all non-German countries, in our own not least, it is certain that the more conservative schools of Christianity will try to make out that there is a close connection between freedom of thought and criticism on the one hand, and a total rejection of Christian ethics and ideals, such as the Germans have practically shewn in their conduct of the war. We shall be told that, whatever our present professions may be, we are drifting through free thought and criticism into a disregard of the vital principles of Christianity.

And on the left lies a danger even greater. The upsetting of all our usual ways of civilization, the horrible sight which has been revealed to us of the depths of hatred and malice which are stored in the human heart under a superficial veneer of humanity, these things will entirely upset the balance of those whose Christianity has been of a merely conventional type, and not deeply based on personal conviction. Such are in the greatest danger of a denial of the divine government of the world, of a despair of the practical value of Christianity. They are likely to throw aside that conventional and easy-going religion which consists in attending church, and wishing that children should have a Christian training. And having nothing better to fall back upon, they are likely to drift further and further towards materialism and atheism.

Here are the Scylla and Charybdis between which our course will in a few months necessarily lie. Are we, the members of the Churchmen's Union, prepared still to sail on in hope of reaching the port? I should say that we are. And the best feature of our case consists in this, that we have only to adhere to our professed principles, to proceed on the lines on which hitherto we have moved, to pass in safety both Scylla and Charybdis.

Our principle has been fixed from the beginning, and is coming out more and more clearly as we proceed. It is that it is the duty of a Christian to walk in the light and not in

darkness, to be ready to accept all help which may come to the intellect from scientific discovery, from historic research, from new views of man and society; but to combine such modernity with heartfelt loyalty to the Founder of Christianity, and to the Church which on earth continues the divine obedience which was the basis of the faith He taught. If we persevere in this attitude we need not fear either the reaction which would lead to intellectual obscurantism, or the despair which would lead to the casting aside of belief in God and Christ.

That liberal German theologians should have been won over to militarism, and should defend the violation of treaties and the oppression and massacre of innocent civilians, has been to many of us a source of sorrow and shame. They have believed the misleading statements of the German Government, the flowing tide of nationalism has been too strong for them, and they have drifted away from their anchorage.

I cannot stay to inquire where some of the causes of this declension may be traced; whether the tendency of the Lutheran teaching to attribute almost a divine character to the State, and to regard one's own nation as the subject of special divine inspiration may have made the apostasy easier. But what is quite clear is that the militarism of Prussia, and the worship of armed force, has no connection with breadth of religious opinion. In the German and Austrian armies half at least of the men come from districts where Roman Catholicism is dominant. The ruling caste in Prussia has no sympathy with breadth of doctrine, but is either anti-Christian or narrowly Lutheran. There is no reason at all for connecting German militarism with the critical movement in theology In England, if there be any tendency to militarism, it certainly cannot be found among the adherents of the broader ways of religious thought. Adherence to Christian ethics is quite as notable among the circles which are regarded as less orthodox in our own country as among the more old-fashioned or conservative circles. Can one imagine the Quakers or Unitarians being captured by the militarist spirit?

Much more serious is the danger that stress and suffering may drive us from the Christian position; that the mystery of the ways in which God works among the peoples, and the strange events which He allows to take place, may cause us to doubt either the power or the goodness of God. Perhaps this loss of faith may have no great intellectual justification. Anyone who has studied history will find it full of events equally mysterious, and equally painful. But what one reads in books in regard to past ages does not affect us like events which come into our own experience. The emotions are more easily persuaded than the intellect, and often impose on the intellect deep shadows, the result of suffering, which govern its conclusions. Nevertheless the problems set by emotion have to be worked out in the forum of intellect, and at all events a way of thought has to be found which is not unworthy of acceptance by a man who preserves his faith that in spite of everything there is divine ruling in the world.

I venture to think, and to maintain, that the objections to a belief in divine providence can only be reasonably met by those who like us take a broad and modern view of Christianity. The problem is one which has been attacked by religion in all ages, but the older solutions are out of date, and it is only the divine spirit working in the Christian community which can provide solutions acceptable to a modern intelligence, as well as to moral and religious feeling.

It is too early yet to try to see in the present war the working of moral law. We must wait a long time before we can judge not only of its immediate, but of its further consequences. But to those, and they are many, who find it hard to reconcile the strength and success of Germany, helped as it has been by a denial alike of Christianity and of humanity, with a providential rule of the world, a few considerations may be suggested. In the first place, the power of Germany has been due, not only, nor even mostly, to unscrupulous militarism, but to virtues which have accompanied it, to a self-denying patriotism, to method and foresight, to surrender of the individual to a great common end. Would it be consistent with the divine ways of

working in the world, as we know them from experience, if Germany reaped no fruit from these great and striking virtues? And we may well believe that the terrible crimes from which Germany has not recoiled in her eagerness, such crimes as the invasion of Belgium, the burning of Louvain, the massacres of Hartlepool and Scarborough, will yet meet with a corresponding punishment.

Has England also not deserved punishment? Our crimes are at the opposite extreme from those of Germany, but they have been very great. It would be a painful task to set them forth. But it is safe to mention among them want of order and discipline, exaggerated individualism, sentimental weakness, the belief in words when deeds were necessary. We have allowed the cleft between class and class of the people to become an almost impassable gulf; we have constantly followed in public affairs a momentary expediency rather than wisdom and principle. These are certainly more amiable faults than those of Germany, but they are faults which bring down an immediate and severe punishment. It is to be hoped that we are tending towards reform in these matters. But our punishment has already overtaken us in the shape of the loss of tens of thousands of lives and many millions of money which greater wisdom would have saved. The bright feature is the gallant self-devotion of so many thousands of young men, a devotion which cannot be in vain, but which must, in the very nature of things, tend to heal our sad divisions, and start us on a higher moral level.

The same want of method and intelligence, the same imperviousness to new light, which Lord Lansdowne in his speech when he introduced the Registration Bill deplored in political organization, we deplore in Church teaching and organization. In religion, as in politics, the English nation is too much given to routine, and too ready to allow good intentions to take the place of planning and a mind open to everything which tends to order and to progress. We are convinced that, as in politics so in religion, our Church needs a

closer contact with fact and the results of science, that she needs awakening and stirring. The last great movement in our Church, the Oxford movement of the middle of the last century, did much good, but unfortunately its gaze was turned backward instead of forward. What we most need now is that, while not giving up our love and veneration for the Church of the past, we should specially think of the needs of the present and the future. We need adaptation to a changed state of things, and in particular to put Church teaching on the level of recent intellectual progress.

It is to be feared that together with the sentimental weakness and want of backbone which has been our bane, there has grown up a notion of Providence to correspond. The Ruler of the world has come to be regarded, at all events in well-to-do circles, as an easy-going and indulgent parent, who is willing easily to pass over offences, to save us from those evils which we have fully deserved, to give us on our own terms the best of both worlds. It is easy to understand that events such as those which have taken place in Belgium have dealt a shattering blow to the view of Providence conceived in this indolent and optimistic vein. If men insist on forming a notion of the divine government of the world on merely subjective grounds, it is sure to be shattered on the facts of the world. But if instead they try to form a notion based not only on internal, but also on external evidence, modified by a study of the ways of God in nature and in history, it will survive as not out of harmony with our surroundings. And we whose notion of divine rule is that it is to be traced not so much in sudden miraculous interpositions as in workings in the visible universe, and in the spirit of man, ought to find this broader doctrine of Providence possible to us.

I have dealt first with this question of Providence because it has become to many the most burning of questions, and because it is the main subject of a volume written by prominent members of our Society, and edited by Canon Foakes Jackson, which is shortly to be published.

Another subject of intense interest, which we hope to discuss at length, is the way of treating the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, especially in education. To all the branches of the Reformed Church this question is one of life and death.

Of the two kinds of criticism of the Bible, textual, and further or higher, the textual came in first, the beginnings of it being found in the writings of Erasmus. And textual criticism of itself is sufficient to destroy any belief in Biblical infallibility. The successor of Mohammed, Othman, acted on a wise instinct when he destroyed all the versions of the Koran save one, for if a book is to be infallible, the text must be above emendation. And it is impossible to discuss the text of a book without considering also its date and authorship, since on these, in a measure, the text must depend.

A great deal of nonsense is talked about the higher criticism, as if it were a thing destructive of Christian faith. It is spoken of as a wicked device of the wicked Germans, and an insult to sacred documents. Even the word higher is misunderstood, as implying a special kind of criticism, full of intellectual arrogance. Of course it only means historic as contrasted with textual criticism. And far from being something apart, it is really only the application to Christian literature and history of the methods which have been evolved in the process of historic study, and the validity of which is universally recognized in all universities and academies, from Japan to Peru. There are no competing methods; it is a question whether we will accept the documents of Christianity as above criticism, or whether we will throw them into historic relief as we throw the writings of Herodotus and Tacitus. This does not in the least imply that they are not more valuable to religion than the writings of Greek and Roman historians, but that we must measure them with the same instruments, and throw them into the same perspective.

But I need not labour this point. The recent history of Biblical criticism abundantly shews that in all schools, orthodox and radical, the methods of historic science are

steadily making way. And there can be no question of their abandonment unless Europe goes back to the obscurity of the dark ages. Our Society here is moving with a flowing tide which is irresistible; only it especially belongs to us, as a Church Society, to insist that criticism shall be combined with a constant sense of spiritual values. Tennyson put the matter in his own masterly way when he wrote:—

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and heart, according well,
> May make one music as before."

But of this subject and other subjects which will come before us in our discussions I will not speak further. I could not in a few sentences throw any real light upon them. And we are to hear in regard to them a series of papers by some of the best authorities. I feel that in speaking of the controversies which now divide the Church I am not on my own ground. I know little about the practical clashings of views, of compromises and experiments in church working. I therefore beg you to allow me in concluding to indulge in a little dream of my own.

I think that modern experience and the study of the psychology of religion are more and more revealing to us how our Protestant forefathers, in the fury of their revolt against Roman abuses, in some cases threw away the wheat with the tares, and flung away institutions and beliefs which are of value to the permanent life of Christianity. It is mainly to their appreciation of this fact that the leaders of the High Anglican party owe the success of some of their movements. They have discovered that, however liable to abuse may be the practise of confession, yet it gives to some Christians a help in the religious life which they can scarcely dispense with. They have discovered that a certain amount of ceremony and ritual in Church services, though it may seem to encourage mere materialism, is yet not really hostile to high spirituality. And in spite of the enormous perversion and imposture which in the middle ages clung to the practise of prayer for the

departed, yet Christians on many sides are feeling that altogether to dispense with such prayers is to lay an almost unbearable burden upon affectionate spirits, as well as to make an assumption which is dying out of modern belief, that the doom of souls is settled for all eternity at the moment of death.

On these subjects I cannot, of course, enlarge. I only mention them in order to furnish an introduction to the notion which I have to propound, which I now come to.

Of all the phenomena of this terrible war, none lies more heavily on the heart and conscience of the class of men to whom I belong, the academic instructors of young men, than this, that war has in its service all the brains of the community. The latest discoveries of science, the newest inventions of civilization, are all remorselessly exploited not in the service of mankind, but in order to kill, to burn, and to torture. Even the professors of history are set, not to draw from the past lessons for the future, but to justify acts of violence and aggression, to prove that one nation has the right to oppress and to crush another. It seems as if suddenly Satan had become not only, as he is sometimes called in the New Testament, the lord of this world, but the master of science, and the director of progress. It is a fearful state of things. How different from the notion, for example, of Auguste Comte, who thought that in the coming age the men of science should become a priesthood of humanity, men looked up to by all, and the leaders of all movements towards a better state of society. The fact is that the highly trained class, the men of science and learning, have suffered the same thing which has fallen upon other classes. They have lost their ideals; the end of life has become obscure to them, they are under the heel of a materialist movement, and many of them only use their knowledge in order to win for themselves wealth and reputation. In their long and severe training they must necessarily have acquired the power of self-control, and a great deal of insight; but they relapse, fall into the common ways, and use their faculties and their acquirements, not as if they had been lent

to them by God in order that they might work for the common good, but as if they were given to them to be used for any purpose which they might choose to take up. So they can easily be bribed by the rulers of the nations to prostitute their powers to the justification of policies which have no right to any justification, on the invention of horrible and inhuman instruments for the wholesale killing, poisoning, and torture of brave men.

Ought Christian men of science to be content with a lower view of their office than that which commended itself to Comte? Ought they not to feel a responsibility to society, and to the God of the human race, to use their knowledge and power not for the destruction, but for the helping and salvation of men? That is the idea which has occurred to me. Men of knowledge of all nations have been wont in recent years to meet in all sorts of congresses in a spirit of friendship and brotherhood. It should not be impossible to build upon the basis of the international comity of savants a society of men pledged to use their powers and their discoveries not for the destruction but for the saving of life, not for promoting but for moderating the friction between nations.

I suppose that most people will feel that at the present moment it is hopeless to propound such a notion. The Germans, who are, on the whole, more advanced in research and science than any other people, are deeply committed to the belief that their duty is to their own nation only, and that they are justified in trying their best to injure other nations. I shall not stay to enquire whether the foolish threats uttered in this country and elsewhere a year ago that Germany was to be crushed may not be largely responsible for the almost insane growth in Germany of a purely nationalist outlook. We must let the Germans alone. But may we not hope, at all events, in England, America, and France, for a strong reaction in favour of a human point of view? Is it not possible that there may arise among us a society of men devoted to the benefit of mankind by the furthering of science,

just as in the middle ages there were vast societies of men devoted to the benefit of mankind by the furthering of Christian cult. It seems to me even possible that the scientific brotherhood might find much to learn from the religious brotherhoods of the middle ages.

In modern England there has been a revival of religious sisterhoods of various kinds, for nursing, for education, for work in the missionary field and among the poor. And more recently, we have seen a revival of societies of men, living a common life and devoted to works of religion. They certainly meet a need, and attract some of the most fervent spirits in the Universities and elsewhere.

Perhaps my auditors may think that these remarks would be more in place if I were addressing the English Church Union instead of the Churchmen's Union. But now I come to the point at which what I have to say is more appropriate to the present audience. For we hold that the furtherance of knowledge, the spread of truth, the attainment of a higher view of God, are as much the object of religion as ministering to the poor or preaching to the unconverted. Ought there not then to be a society, formed on principles strictly unworldly, to invade all the fields of knowledge, with the high object of reaping in those fields results which should tend to the moral and spiritual progress of mankind?

I have a dream of such a society, with hostels at Oxford and Cambridge, Birmingham, and Newcastle, a sort of modern version of the Dominican Friars of the middle ages, every member of which shall be devoted to some branch of science or research, with the object of bringing to light some fresh aspect of the ways of God in nature and history. Even the old vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience might be adopted in a somewhat modernized version. For none of the students should make any money by his work; all should live a simple, common life, and there should be a governing committee to assign to each tasks suited to his powers, and in line with his acquired knowledge.

At our last meeting, enthusiasm was stirred by the suggestion that the Church was really a Logos society. Such an order as I have ventured in merest outline to suggest would be a scientific branch of the logos society, to work on parallel lines to the branches which are already labouring in practical matters. The coming age will see many new developments, will this be one of them? It is for the younger generation to decide.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN PULPIT AND PARISH.

By Alfred Fawkes, M.A., Vicar of Ashby St. Ledgers.

In this paper I propose to consider the moral rather than the literary and historical difficulties raised by the Old Testament. First I shall treat some of the moral difficulties presented by the Old Testament to simple people, and then some of the moral advantages which attend its study. The former are great; the latter are greater. But to find them we must get below the surface soil.

From a very early date the Old Testament has been a stumbling block to Christians. To Gentile converts much of its content was meaningless and offensive, the barbarous record of a barbarous tribe. This attitude is still found among thoughtful Roman Catholics who have not, like ourselves, been brought up upon it. A French *savant* of our own generation tells us of the horror with which he read the Books of Samuel and of the Kings for the first time. Marcion and the Gnostics were the outcome of this sense of contrast. They cut the knot by throwing the Old Testament and the God of the Old Testament, or Demiurge, overboard; and thus, though they involved themselves in other difficulties which do not concern us here, they lightened the ship. But, as Graeco-Roman civilization declined, the opposition between the barbaric conceptions of Hebrew history, and the actual conditions of thought and life were felt less sharply. The Christians of the first age were denounced as ἄθεοι, because they had none of the

paraphernalia of the popular cults—no temple, no image, no altar, no priest. But by the end of the second century the sacrificial terminology common to Jewish and pagan worship had been naturalized among them, and what was at first metaphor hardened into dogma; the climate changed. Nor was it long before the belief in witchcraft, in the divine right of the hierarchy, and in the religious duty of persecution—beliefs destined to deluge Europe with blood for centuries—were taken over from Hebrew antiquity by the mediaeval world. The image of God was distorted; darkness lay upon the face of the deep. For the middle ages the wonder was not that God should condemn the great majority of the human race to eternal torment—this was what was to be expected; the marvel, the exceeding great marvel, was that He should exempt any from the common doom.

The Reformation was a great emancipation of the human spirit; the exegesis of the first generation of Reformers, in particular that of the otherwise rigorous Calvin, was bold and free. But, in this department at least, the dogmatism of their successors was more oppressive than that of the mediaeval schoolmen, whose doctrine of inspiration was balanced by a larger and more historical theology. Now it lay a dead weight upon religion—a snare to conscience, and a provocation to unbelief. Even in our own time how many of that large class, in some respects the most important in the community, the half-educated, pass easily from the repulsion inspired by the imperfectly moralized Deity of the Old Testament to the rejection of the Father-God of the New. To a great extent, to a very great extent, the Churches are responsible. Think as we will of their motives, their sound has been uncertain; they have not declared, nor even now do they declare, the whole counsel of God.

The Lectionary in use among ourselves since 1871, has been to a certain extent, though imperfectly, weeded.

But even now, on May 27th, we hear that, when Elisha cursed some badly-behaved children, two she-bears came at

once out of the wood, and "tare forty and two of them." (II. Kings ii. 23). It was certainly very rude of the children to call after the prophet, "Go up, thou bald-head"; the infirmities of the elderly are to be respected. But a clergyman of to-day, though he might feel annoyed, would stop short of cursing them; and the penalty seems disproportionate to the offence. While on the xivth Sunday after Trinity the wholesale slaughter carried out by Jehu, who even for his time was an exceptionally bloodthirsty sultan, is commended. "The Lord said unto Jehu, Thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes." The murderous record which, is told as a matter of course and with complete indifference, suggests the Bulgarian atrocities or the Armenian massacres —the East changes slowly; while in the legends of Isaac, of Jephthah, and of Agag the crimson thread of human sacrifice is seen.

This might be got over if readers read and preachers preached intelligently. But they do not. The poet speaks of

> "the pig-of-lead-like pressure
> Of the preaching man's immense stupidity;"

while the average church-goer wants to be made to feel comfortable, not to think or to learn. And only two alternatives present themselves with regard to narratives of this sort. Either they must be omitted—if we were not bound by a Lectionary we should probably not select them for public reading—or they must be criticized. What is inadmissible is that they should be read without criticism: this is simply to put stumbling blocks in people's way. Nor need we go far afield for our criticism. The Bible criticizes itself. "The times of this ignorance God winked at;" and "I commanded it not neither came it into my mind."

When Dr. George Adam Smith was editing the correspondence of Henry Drummond, he came across innumerable and heart-rending cases (he tells us) in which "the literal acceptance of the Bible—the faith that finds in it nothing erroneous, nothing defective, and (outside of the sacrifices and the Temple) nothing temporary—had driven men and

women from religion." The questions before our generation rise rather out of the New Testament than the Old. But--in particular to those whose knowledge of religion comes to them mainly from the Sunday sermon and the Sunday school—"the discrepancies of the Old Testament, its rigorous laws, its pitiless tempers, its open treatment of sexual questions, the atrocities which are narrated in its histories and sanctioned by its laws"—these things are an open wound. The pulpit or Sunday school which ignores this wound or heals it slightly, is useless and even mischievous. And we are working in the dark, it is important to remember, if we confine ourselves in this matter to the decorous and semi-apologetic criticism of University Professors. The many do not, and cannot be expected to, read this. And those of us who want to know what they are thinking must go down into the slumland of the mind, and make ourselves acquainted with the very plain-spoken secularist literature which is written for and appeals to them. This is often ignorant and often blasphemous; but it is always vigorous. It can be answered, and, if people will grasp the nettle, it can be answered easily. It is not the answer which is the difficulty, it is putting the answer into a shape which half-educated people can read and can understand. And this is where the *Clarion* will help us more than the professors, the tub-thumping Park orator more than Driver or Robertson Smith.

For, with all his faults of knowledge and temper, the tub-thumper is a standing proof of the futility of apologetic, of what I will call the spavined or knock-kneed, type. This apologetic is based on the real or supposed needs of the elderly Christian. May I say that we hear a good deal too much of the elderly Christian? and that I do not believe that the Apostle, who, though he invented for him the title of the "weak brother," did not suffer fools gladly, ever contemplated or would for a moment have tolerated the elevation of this singularly tiresome person to the position in the Christian community which he has come to occupy? "Are you afraid of the weak brother?" the

Liberal priest is asked in Mr. Bagot's *Casting of Nets.* "No—of the strong brother," is the pertinent answer. "I would they were even cut off which trouble you," would have been St. Paul's summary aspiration in his regard.

A popular modern commentary—*The One Volume Bible Commentary*—on 1 Kings, xviii., 40, where we read that "Elijah brought the prophets of Baal down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there"—tells us with a certain *naiveté* that "the prophet probably (mark the doubt!) was not himself their executioner, but made the people give practical evidence of their conversion." (p. 225). And the same work accounts for and justifies the extermination of the Canaanites by their abnormal wickedness.

> "Hence arose the moral necessity for that order for their extermination, which has sometimes been a stumbling block to the religious mind. The attempt to carry out that order had an effect for good upon the Israelites, in so far as it engaged them in a work of moral and spiritual sanitation; the failure to carry it out completely left open to them a source of weakness and danger from which sprang many of their subsequent corruptions and defections." (p. 142).

So, contemplating these massacres, no less eminent a man than Newman is moved to compassion—for the victims? no—but for their executioners. "Doubtless" (he reminds us) "as they slew those who suffered for the sins of their fathers"—for the slaughter was indiscriminate, sparing neither age nor sex—"their thoughts turned first to the fall of Adam, and next to that unseen state where all inequalities are righted." (*Plain and Parochial Sermons*, iii., 187). Not even Newman's great name can make this sophistry other than foolish and mischievous. Thus might a German professor apologize for the German policy of frightfulness—the bayonetting of babies, the violation of women, the organized crime by command, which Europe is witnessing to-day.

There is no reason to suppose that the Canaanites were more wicked than other Syrian or Arabian tribes; if they were, as our Lord pointed out with reference to those on whom the Tower of Siloam fell, this was not the cause of their extermination, had they really been exterminated—which a

survey of the historical books shows was not the case. It is important, it is very important to say, these things plainly—even at the risk of the disappearance of the elderly Christian from his accustomed pew.

> "I wish that no Sunday School walls showed a picture of Abraham with uplifted knife, ready to kill Isaac. Such a picture tends to degrade our thought both of God and man. Let me lay it down as an axiom of our Christian life that no lower idea of God will do than the highest we have known. The moment you lower your idea of God, you lower the whole standard of life. If therefore you read, in Numbers xxv., 16, 'The Lord spake unto Moses saying, Vex the Midianites, for they vex you with their wiles,' never allow the children—(he is speaking to Sunday-school teachers)—to think that God said so; and when you find, in Exodus iii., 22, directions ascribed to God as to how the Israelites are to steal the property of the Egyptians by pretending to borrow it, take care you do not allow the children to think that such directions came from God."*

The spavined apologetic, dear to the elderly Christian, invoked in this connection the notions of compensation, or ransom, or the supreme dominion of God over property. Nonsense! Stealing is stealing; but there was a time, and there are even now communities, in which it is not thought disgraceful to steal.

Do not, then, make your concessions grudgingly; both God and man love a cheerful giver. Do not think that what is given to truth is taken from religion; religion never was, and never will be, served either by ignorance or by a lie. And do not talk about pious frauds. No fraud is pious: the deceiver is a knave and the deceived the victim of knavery; nor are matters mended if, as is often the case, the deceiver is himself deceived. Too many people locate God in the unknown, and think that He diminishes as knowledge advances; so that He becomes a vanishing quantity—a shabby, an attenuated, and a threadbare God. But it is not so. He is *Deus scientiarum*—as the Vulgate has it: the God of knowledge. (I. Sam. ii. 3). He manifests Himself in every department of life and of experience; whatever is added to human knowledge and efficiency is a revelation of and from Him.

* *Shall we understand the Bible?*—Rev. T. Rhondda Williams (A. & C. Black, 1909).

II.

(1) The study of Comparative Religion has cleared the air: it is not too much to say that in its light we now for the first time understand the Old Testament. Only the ignorant can be scandalized by its crudities, for these crudities are found of necessity in crude times and among crude men. The morality of the Sermon on the Mount would have been impossible in the period of the Judges: it could neither have been practised nor understood. This is what Ezekiel meant when he represents God as saying of the House of Israel, "I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live" (xx. 25); or Jeremiah when he presents the same thought in another setting, "I spake not to your fathers nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices." (vii. 22). And the rabbis, more enlightened than many Christian divines, made little of this contradiction between the Levitical and the prophetic teaching: the sacrificial worship of the Temple, the Talmud tells us, was tolerated, not ordained, by God.

(2) For a similar reason the difficulty presented by miracle disappears. In primitive times life is lived in an atmosphere of miracle; and when everything is a miracle nothing is a miracle. The modern attitude towards miracle would have been incomprehensible in early Israel, as it would be to this day to many primitive races, because by miracle they and we do not mean the same thing. For us miracles either do not happen at all, or break in on natural law at very rare intervals. These races know nothing of natural, and little of any other, law; with them miracle is a thing of everyday occurrence, and therefore not, in our sense, a miracle at all. Early men were moved in much the same way and to much the same extent by it as the modern churchgoer is by an impressive sermon or the Member of Parliament by an eloquent speech. That is to say, very little. "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead;" there is much knowledge of human nature in these words.

(3) Once get the conception of religion as Spirit, life, movement,—involved, since it exists in and for men, in the universal flow of human affairs—and the problem ceases to be a problem: what *is* corresponds to what, we are assured, *must* be. What is permanent? Direction, orientation—we live in a Godward moving world. It is, indeed, a world only in part reduced to order; only in part rational; it is rudimentary, incoherent, incomplete. It exhibits goodness, but imperfect goodness; reason, but inchoate reason; law, but law imperfectly realized and enforced. Yet into this universal stream we must put the Bible, the Church, God even as conceived by us: all things flow. But we may do so fearlessly. Aristotle tells us of certain strangers who came to Heraclitus, and, finding him in his workshop, covered with the smoke and dust of the furnace, would have withdrawn. But the philosopher bade them enter boldly: ἔνταυθα γάρ καί ἔναι θέους—"for here also there are gods."

III.

Let us consider some of these "gods" who reveal themselves in these early records; some of the permanent values of these Old Testament Scriptures, which St. Paul describes as "the oracles (τά λόγια) of God." (Rom. iii. 2).

(1) The Old Testament is the first attempt at a philosophy of religion and history. Greek history was Greek only, the materials for a universal history had not been accumulated till the Alexandrian age.

> "But a focus was still lacking which should draw together these scattered rays of history and present the nations of men as different members of one common family. This central point was at last, in the fulness of time, supplied by the Bible. From the moment that the Jewish Scriptures became known to the Greeks the sacred volume could not but take its place as a compendium of the history of the world. With all the exclusiveness of Jewish nationality, the Old Testament yet presented what no other book had yet done—the families of the earth looking back to a past and forward to a future which made them aware of the unity of their destinies."*

(2) The Old Testament knows nothing of an inspiration which is a bar to progressive thinking. Ezekiel, *e.g.*, dismisses

* Mark Pattison: *Essays* I. 164.

Moses with costs. In the Commandment which we still read in our English Communion Service, God is made to declare that he visits the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him. Ezekiel will have none of this primitivism:—

> "Are not my ways equal? The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (xviii. 20).

(3) The Old Testament has no Hell, or place of eternal torment for men; and no Devil, in the sense of an arch-enemy of God and man at the head of a host of evil spirits. These beliefs are developments. And they are not necessary, but contingent, developments; the development might have taken, as it is now taking, another shape.

(4) The Old Testament has no trace of what a modern writer calls "the obscene supernatural," which has left its trail on so much early religion, and which survives wherever superstition is found—and where is it not found?—to-day. The necromancer, the occultist, the clairvoyant—"they that have familiar spirits, wizards that chirp and mutter"—not here is religion or the evidence of religion. In this matter we have gone back, not forward; the men of the Old Testament were saner, cleaner, more reasonable than we.

(5) The Old Testament, though feeling its way to the conception of the immortality of the individual, has not reached it. This is a defect. But the accentuation of the individual side of immortality in later times has not been an unmixed benefit: there is a care for personal salvation which is meticulous and even mean. It is probable that those "save their souls," to use the old phrase, best who do not think too much about it; it is unhealthy to be always thinking about one's health. While the idea of corporate immortality has elicited their highest values from some of the best men and women of our time. This conception is independent of, though it does not exclude, that of personal immortality; and, apart from the former, the moral worth of the latter is

small. The highest form of belief unites them: the two make one whole.

IV.

What criticism takes away is the merest confectionery of the pulpit: the Word of God remains. And it remains not in decay but living and vigorous:—

> "*Jérusalem est sortie plus brillante et plus belle du travail en apparence destructeur de la science moderne; les pieux recits dont on berça notre enfance sont devenus, grâce à une saine interprétation, des hautes vérités; et c'est à nous qui voyons Israël dans sa réele beauté, c'est à nous autres critiques qu'il appartient vraiment de dire: Stantes erunt pedes nostri in atriis tuis, Jerusalem!*" *

How unique is its knowledge of human nature! and what a mine this opens to the preacher! Remember Bishop Butler's Sermon on Balaam, F. W. Robertson's on Jacob, Newman's on Saul. The hero of Harold Frederic's *Illumination* is dismayed when doubt is thrown on the personality of Abraham. But is a tribal less real than an individual personality? Is it not more representative, because less dependent on time and place conditions? How greatly, *e.g.*, has the Lamech legend exercised the ingenuity of commentators! Yet how completely has this ingenuity been wasted! How definitely wrong the turn it took has proved! For "these things are an allegory." In the first place Lamech, like Cain, is a tribe, and the famous song refers to tribal honour, which in primitive times was dependent on the strict exaction of blood vengeance for bloodshed. And, secondly, Genesis iv. describes the rise of early civilization; the nomad life is exchanged for the pastoral; the city is built; the arts of peace are cultivated; the weapons of war forged.

> "How does the Song of Lamech greet all this progress of the equipment and adornment of human life? With an outburst of praise to God the giver? With an apostrophe to man's power and skill? With thankful notes for the peace of the pastoral life defended from its enemies? With none of these; but with a savage exultation in the fresh power of vengeance which all these novel instruments have placed in their inventor's hands.
>
> "How weird is this! How terrible! The first results of civilization are to equip hatred, and render revenge more deadly. And all the more weird is the little fragment, that out of these far-off days it seems to

* Renan: *Études d'histoire religieuse*, p. 74.

mock us with some grotesque reflection of our own time. Civilization finding its apotheosis in enormous armaments; wealth and prosperity leading people to an arrogant clamour for war." (p. 97).*

These words were written in 1899. Do they not sound prophetic? Does not their echo come back to us (1915) after many days? May we not learn from such records as those of Lamech, that "All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come?

V.

Lastly, the Old Testament is emphatically a man's book. The decadent, the sentimentalist, the time-server, the sayer of smooth things who, like Agag, walks delicately, would have come off badly at the hands of the prophets, who were strong, masterful, and often ruthless men. Your true prophet is ever a fighter, he smites with the word of his mouth. For the test of national religion is sensitiveness to national sin. The office of the prophet and that of the courtier, the demagogue, or the man on the make—the popular preacher or religionist—are incompatible; such are partakers, not denouncers of their people's misdeeds. For us of the clergy such temptations arise less from the nation as a whole, than from the religious section of it, and in particular from the Church or sect to which we belong. Most of us have read Mr. Churchill's fine novel, *The Inside of the Cup*, and felt that the note struck in it went home. There is a real danger of a clergyman's being silent on social ethics out of regard either to the ecclesiastical policy of his denomination, or to its financial interest; he may fail to declare the whole counsel of God—and so to be "pure from the blood of all men"—from cowardice, from human respect, from a false conscience, from a desire to be on the winning side. Yesterday, this was that of the *Record;* to-day it is that of the *Church Times;* to-morrow—no, not to-morrow, but possibly the day after to-morrow—it may be that of the *Modern Churchman*, in which case it will be time for us to look to ourselves.

* *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament.* George Adam Smith, D.D.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

By the Rev. Canon Glazebrook, D.D.,
late Headmaster of Clifton.

This paper deals with the teaching which is or might be given in secondary schools. Much might be written on the reasons why such teaching should be given, but I will mention only one. The conditions of middle class life in our day are such that if the Old Testament were not studied at school it would never be studied at all, but known merely as the source from which a few famous chapters are drawn for Sunday lessons. That fact is important for our purpose, for it suggests a standard by which we may measure the results, or the aims, of the teaching given in our schools. Whatever its quality, that teaching supplies the only knowledge of the Old Testament with which the average man or woman will be equipped for life. So we have our problem set us in the form of two questions.

(1) What kind and amount of knowledge is it desirable that the young man or woman should possess?

(2) What kind and amount of knowledge can we reasonably expect to be acquired in the course of ordinary school work?

If we are to be practical, we shall not set the standard too high, but have a strict regard to what can be accomplished with ordinary intelligence under normal conditions. And we must not define the word knowledge too rigidly, but assume that to be known which has been fairly well taught a sufficient number of times. For, though the results of the teaching may not be immediately present to the memory, they are not lost, but can be recovered when occasion arises.

Unfortunately, the two questions do not admit of an answer which will satisfy everyone, for there is no consensus among

teachers or taught as to the ideal object of the whole process. All I can do is to offer you first an account of the few principles upon which most people agree, and then to show how widely different schools of thought are separated from each other when they regard certain other principles.

The points of agreement may be summarised in this way. The history of Israel is, like all history, an example of the working of Providence in human life. But it is supremely important, because Israel was the depository of the highest religious truth in successive ages, and was therefore the foundation upon which Christianity was built. The main facts of Israelite history, therefore, ought to be known, and the chief characters understood. Nor is that all. A general acquaintance with the law and the writings of the prophets is necessary for the understanding of the Gospel narratives.

Again, the writings of Hebrew prophets and historians are punctuated all through with the faith that spiritual values are of infinitely more account than material power. He has read the Old Testament to little purpose who does not find in all its pages a commentary on the text "Great is truth and prevaileth." But these lessons cannot be learned from any abstract, however excellent. A careful study of the text is the first condition of appreciating any great literature, and he knows nothing of the Bible history who is not familiar with its very words.

So far we are all, I hope, agreed. Now let us come to points of difference.

The teachers at whose feet I sat in my youth, and whose mantle has fallen upon younger shoulders, added some other principles to the above. They taught me that the whole of the Old Testament was literally true, even where it contradicts itself. They had inherited from the middle ages an elaborate system of typology, by which the law, the tabernacle, and individual heroes, were made to appear as shadows of the coming Christ. They discovered Messianic prophecies in all sorts of colourless phrases in historian, prophet, and psalmist. They accepted the favourable verdicts pronounced upon David and Jael as

absolute, and believed that somehow their crimes did not tarnish their ideal virtues. And they taught that the moral standard is the same throughout the Old Testament.

We need not discuss these propositions. Probably there is no one here present who has not long ago rejected them all. But we must remember that they are still widely prevalent, and that they colour a great deal of the Bible teaching which is now being given in our schools. In order that we may realise how greatly they conflict with the principles which most of us consciously or unconsciously recognize, let me summarize the position of those who teach on modern lines.

The authors of the wonderful library contained in the Old Testament were all very human, liable to error, and much given to correcting each other. The books vary as much in ethical standard as they do in date and in literary genius. But collectively they present a luminous record of the process of revelation by which a singularly gifted people were led up from fetichism and polytheism to an ethical monotheism of the highest order. Consequently the central interest of the student is to trace the parallel lines of advance—social, ethical, ceremonial, theological—by which Israel reached a nobler conception of God and of man. The Hebrew prophets being the leaders in this advance for several centuries, a knowledge of their writings is indispensable. But they were also great poets, whom not to know is to lack an essential part of a liberal education. The study of the prophets ought therefore to hold a prominent place in school teaching. The more carefully they are read, the better it will be understood how small a place prediction occupies in their writings, and how often their predictions failed of fulfilment. So the Messianic element in the Old Testament will be reduced to its true proportions, and assigned to its proper date.

I venture to assume that you agree with me in general that this last summary, together with the first, represents the kind of knowledge, and the attitude of mind, with which we should like young men and women to enter life. How far can such a

demand be satisfied? A moderate compliance with it involves a good deal—familiarity with the text of a very large book, an ordered knowledge of many historical characters and incidents, and the comprehension and application of some important and difficult principles. At the lowest estimate the time required is considerable, and the time available in ordinary school life, between the ages of nine and nineteen, can hardly be reckoned at 300 hours of teaching and an equal amount of preparation. Obviously no time can be spared for what is either unimportant or uninstructive. Let us clear the way by ruling out such matter as plainly comes under those heads.

The narrative parts of the Old Testament are loaded with a good deal of repetition, a good deal of unimportant detail, and a great many contradictions between parallel accounts of the events. Children are only too ready to pick up such things, because they have no standard by which to measure values. Somehow, then, they ought to be saved from reading that which they will not profitably remember.

Again, controversy is poison to children. However eloquently you may expound the theory of the composition of the Pentateuch, you will produce no effect beyond a general impression that the whole is untrustworthy and uninteresting. If you take a chapter of Isaiah and point out the most obvious interpretations, you will only cause confusion of mind. Up to the age of sixteen or seventeen there is no place for higher criticism in a sensible system.

Yet we need to use the results of higher criticism. Why have most people such a vague conception of Abraham or David? Because in our Bibles there are two Abrahams and two Davids. Each appears alternately as the rude picturesque hero of the early records, and as the conventional saint of the post-exilic revision. With one eye fixed on either alternative how can we attain a clear vision? Commonsense appears to require that the hero alone should be presented to young readers, who can delight in his virtues and readily pardon his failings.

Can all these demands be satisfied at the same time? Yes, but only on one condition. If children are to study a clear and consistent narrative, such as only criticism can give, and yet not meddle with critical questions, they must have a text printed on purpose. Not a corrected text, for loyalty to the Revised Version is very important, but a text selected on critical principles, so as to give a clear and consistent narrative.

There is, of course, nothing new in the suggestion of printing selections. The mere need of brevity has imposed that long ago. It is only the principle of rational selection which gives offence in some quarters. But the attacks grow much feebler as time goes on, and the principle is in a fair way to general acceptance.

Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that such a text will be available, and proceed to enquire how it is to be made useful. Technical questions about methods of teaching we cannot well discuss now, so I propose to mention only matters of which all can judge.

Roughly speaking, the pupils in secondary schools may be divided into three grades according to age—it being understood that clever children count as older than their years, and stupid ones as younger. We will call them A, B, and C. A.—Children under 12; B.—Between 12 and 16; C.—From 16 to 19. Let us try to construct a syllabus which will give them all the opportunity of learning the facts and grasping the ideas which have been already enumerated. In this world of second bests we can rarely attain perfection. But let us for a few minutes agree to put away the so-called "practical" objections which so easily beset us when we engage in discussion, and indulge ourselves with a picture of what might happen if all went well.

A.—In the first stage we are to lay the foundations. As there is, *ex hypothesi*, plenty of time, we need not (as we might be tempted in an elementary school) anticipate the teaching which properly belongs to a later stage. We have to consider only what appeals to the pupils, and what will be useful afterwards. First of all come the stories about the leading

characters; but not in the order of their historical importance. It is the simple forms of life and the ruder characters with which the young can best sympathise, while the complicated problems of an advanced civilisation are caviare to them. A wise teacher, therefore, will give a great preponderance to the books of Genesis, Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, and be content with a very sketchy treatment of the monarchy. Up to the time of Solomon the biographies of individuals make up the histories. If the children can place them in chronological order and can picture the kind of society in which each of them lived, they know a good deal. As for dates, if they could assign Abraham and David to the right millenia, I should be content. But they rarely can. Next after incident comes a simple study of character, and such morals as can be drawn from the conduct and fate of the heroes. I do not recommend the artificial Sunday school method which justifies Jacob's treatment of Laban, and finds sacramental symbolism in the honeycomb from Samson's lion. Such teaching, which is seriously inculcated in some text-books, may possibly impress children at the moment, but it will certainly provoke a reaction in which more than typology will be renounced. No! Teachers must at all costs be honest. Old Testament characters must be judged fairly, allowance being made for the standards of their own times, and praise or blame given accordingly. One advantage of this method is that the earlier heroes come so very near to children. Their impulsiveness, their superstition, their want of knowledge and forethought, no less than their affection, their generosity, and their piety, make them admirable examples and warnings.

Another advantage is that by recognizing that the standards of different ages were different, we prepare the way for a later recognition of progressive revelation. Honesty must also be the rule in answering the question "Is it really true?" which will sometimes be asked about stories in the Old Testament. Some people are afraid that candour may undermine children's respect for the Bible; but I venture to think

they are mistaken. For the modern child is not as some of us were fifty years ago. In his own mind fact and fable so naturally run into each other, that he feels no surprise at finding their boundaries blurred elsewhere. Unless he has been carefully trained to regard the Bible as literally true, he finds it quite natural that here also there should be fairy-tales.

Provided the lessons are surrounded with a proper atmosphere of reverence, the Flood and Jacob's ladder can be treated with perfect frankness, and no shock felt or given.

B.—Boys and girls between 12 and 16 are far more simple-minded than most of their elders are wont to suppose. Many of the questions which interest us keenly are to them either tedious or meaningless. Try them with the evidence for the development of the priesthood, or a literary analysis of Genesis, or the theology of the prophets, and they will be probably bored. Yet the same simplicity may produce an appearance of interest. I know one enthusiastic teacher whose pupils practically learnt by heart a long critical analysis of the history of Israel, and can repeat it years after, but it has meant little to them. They learned it because her enthusiasm made them believe it was the right thing, not because the thought appealed to them. What they really want at that age is the narrative of the Bible text with its literary charm, which they are beginning to appreciate (if it is not too much pointed out). They have wider views now; they can follow the larger movements of history; they can picture the clash of rival empires—the hammer and anvil between which Israel was crushed. They can therefore learn a good deal of the history of monarchy and exile, as well as form a more connected idea of the earlier times. They can, in fact, see events in something like a true proportion. They may now be introduced to a few of the simplest passages in the prophets, which give vivid sketches of manners or inculcate primary truths. But it is surprising how difficult they find even the easiest. Their moral judgments are more developed. They can not only discuss the characters of individuals, but also compare the

moral standard of one age with another, and so approach the conception of a progressive revelation.

Let us just mention two other studies which are appropriate to the middle stage. The geography of Palestine is at present sorely neglected. You will not find one person in fifty who can tell you its size without an error of from 500 to 1000 per cent. And to most people its relation to the neighbouring empires is absolutely unknown. Another thing to be desired is that while the memory is fresh, children should become familiar with the countless memorable phrases—noble, patriotic, or poetical—with which the whole surface of the narrative is enriched. He has acquired a large part of a liberal education who has really made a possession of those

> Jewels five words long
> Which on the stretched forefinger of old Time
> Sparkle for ever.

c.—In the third stage we naturally find more variety of custom in schools. One favourite plan is to spend a year in reading one book with a commentary. Let us take a favourable instance, and assume that the subject is the book of Kings and the commentary that of the *Century Bible*. If you divide the number of pages by the number of possible lessons you will find that each lesson must cover 15 pages of small print. One lesson would be on the eighth chapter of the first book of Kings. The mere textual difficulties of the first eleven verses would absorb the whole time—and very unprofitably; and yet to leave them unnoticed breeds hopeless confusion of mind. Even supposing these difficulties to be overcome, do you really think that a year's study of that book will bring in an adequate return of moral and religious enlightenment?

A much better plan, when external examinations do not interfere, is to use a selected narrative of the whole Old Testament history, including large quotations from the prophets. That is a method on which I have worked, and which is adopted in many of the leading schools. It has the advantage of being simple, and at the same time offering countless opportunities to the skilful teacher. But I think there may be found a more

excellent way, which has not yet been fully explored. If I were planning a school which was free from the shackles of external examinations, I think I should develop some hints which I have derived in part from experiment, in part from venturesome girls' schools, and lay out a course in four sections, as follows:—

(1) The narrative of the Hexateuch, with a careful study of the main documents, including the earlier parts of the Law.

(2) The narrative of Judges, Samuel, and 1 Kings, with special attention to the manner, morals, and religious practices of the age.

(3) The second book of Kings, with large selections from the prophets—Amos to Deutero-Isaiah. Here the history would be mainly used to provide the background to the figures of the prophets, and the social and religious problems which found a solution in their teaching.

(4) The books of Ezra and Nehemiah, trito-Isaiah, and other late prophets, with a study of the development of the Law and the Wisdom Literature.

To do the whole of this in three years would be possible only if the previous stages had laid a very good foundation.

If time did not allow all four sections to be treated fully, I would reduce the first and fourth to small proportions—say one term for each—and give the bulk of the time to the second and third. For it is in the prophets that the real significance of Israel's history resides, and they cannot be understood without some serious study of the books from Judges to Kings.

So far I have assumed the existence of a suitable text for the pupils in each grade. I would gladly stop here, without handling the thorny question of commentary. But, just because it is thorny, somebody must handle it with determination.

"Oh, it is simple enough," I hear someone say. "Give the class a plain text, and let the teacher do the rest. There are plenty of good commentaries in which he can find all that he requires." Quite true, if every teacher had a good supply of books, and would (as I once used to do) spend five or six

hours in preparing each lesson. But the vast majority of teachers have neither so much time to spare nor such a thirst for Old Testament knowledge. And few of them have the requisite library at hand. They depend, for the most part, upon notes provided to suit their special work.

And yet a book for teachers only—a sort of key—can hardly find a publisher; for it could not command a remunerative sale.

Further, an old remark of Irving's often recurs to my mind: "A notebook is not attention, neither is it a boy's mind." Suppose the teacher to be armed with all knowledge, he must either trust to that broken reed, the memory, of words spoken only once, or deliberate notes. Now such dictation is slow, irksome, and unremunerative. I have read so many note-books produced in different schools that I feel strongly about them. What is to be done then? There remains only one plan. Notes must be printed which will more or less suit both teacher and pupil. Of course notes are dangerous in the hands of an unskilful teacher. He may trust to them wholly, instead of adding knowledge. He may so ask questions that the class will study the notes and neglect the text. He may play various pranks. But, after all, where would he be with a plain text?

Such a commentary need not be long. Half the notes on a complete text are protective; that is, they warn the reader about errors of interpretation, or try to explain away difficulties. A selected text renders nearly all these unnecessary, being free of the passage which requires anything more than constructive or illustrative comment. That is an important point; for *μέγα βίβλιον, μέγα κακόν*, is eminently true of commentaries.

Having said so much, perhaps I ought to describe what I mean by constructive comment. The great mass of the notes should briefly state facts—historical, geographical, social, literary, or linguistic—which are necessary for the understanding of the text. The class should read them beforehand, so as to be in a state of intelligence, but not too seriously, lest they

should neglect the text. The teacher should use them instead of a notebook, by drawing attention to those which he thinks important.

They should also contain remarks of a general character, which may serve as hints to a good teacher, in case he has time to deal with other topics besides the obvious. But they should not be what is called devotional. Devotional application is the teacher's business. If he cannot manage it unaided, he will certainly fail when all the class knows where his inspiration come from.

The use of the commentary, in a word, is to save time all round, in order that the teacher may have as much time as possible for the highest part of his lesson—the inculcation of moral and religious truth.

Treated in the manner which I have indicated, I believe the Old Testament to have a wonderful power of training the heart and mind—a power which has been seldom used to the full in our education.

The vastness of the events recorded; the width of sympathy shown for different types of character; the variety of the appeal, which touches almost every stage of moral and religious development; the unwavering faith in a providence which not only orders external events but also guides man's growing conceptions of God and duty—all these should unite to brace the young heart, to enlighten the eyes, and to widen the sympathies.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE PULPIT.

By Rev. J. Gamble, B.D., Vicar of St. Mary's, Leigh Woods, Clifton.

In all teaching the person first to be considered is the learner. It is his situation and needs which should determine the instruction. The teaching of the pulpit cannot evade this stringent principle. The sermons of an age represent not unfairly the religious requirements of the average worshipper. The preacher cannot go far beyond him. If he does the listener will not follow. I have often thought the clergy are in this respect often unreasonably blamed. The intellectual level to which their sermons bear witness is frequently said to be a low one. But perhaps it is as high as that on which the majority of their listeners stand. They preach what they think their audience needs, and what it is able to receive, and they cannot be fairly blamed if they study the nine-tenths of those present rather than the one-tenth.

Preachers and hearers thus act and re-act each upon the other. The very first essential of a profitable sermon is that it should be addressed to those who will hear it. Thus we get into a vicious circle. Sermons are not what they might be, because the preacher, rightly or wrongly, does not believe that his hearers will bear any except the smallest intellectual demands. The intelligent listener, finding nothing but leaves, goes away disappointed. The common measure between speaker and hearers has not been found. Thus in considering the teaching of the New Testament from the pulpit we must start from the position of the listener. What is this position?

His knowledge of the New Testament would be pronounced by a student to be very defective and insecure. He has probably never at any time in his life studied the book. He has not studied it at school, and he has not studied it afterwards. The words as he hears them read have a familiar sound in his ears. They may raise questions in his mind. But he has never seriously set himself to formulate his difficulties or to

co-ordinate his ideas. Even if he has he has probably been dismayed by the intricacy of the problems by which he finds himself confronted. Women have more leisure than men, and, if I may trust my own experience, I should say there are large numbers of women who earnestly desire a more thorough knowledge of the book than they feel themselves to possess, and are willing to take trouble to secure it. The information they desire, however, cannot be adequately given from the pulpit. There is a crying need for honest bible classes.

But although the worshipper brings to church a very imperfect knowledge of the New Testament, he does bring with him what is of still greater consequence, a religion. Every human being has a religion. He has his own conception of the world, its order and its government. He looks beyond the things seen to the things unseen. While the things of time are in his hands the things eternal are in his heart. The instability of earthly goods, the precariousness of life, raise questions from which he cannot escape, and constrain him to shape for himself a religion.

What is this religion? Nominally it is based upon the New Testament. In reality it is the result of experience inherited and acquired. The past counts for more in its formation than the present. The individual may modify slightly what he has received. But the modifications do not affect the substance of the inheritance. The religion he bequeaths to his children is substantially that which he has received from his parents.

We point with gratitude to the place of supreme authority in which the English Church enthrones the Bible. It forms her ultimate authority. This fact is indeed of the greatest consequence to students and controversialists. We cannot, however, fail to see that the popular religion among us is disengaging itself more and more each year from the sacred book. The book ceases more and more to be seriously taught, read and understood. A generation is growing up to whom even the facts of the Gospel history will be dim and remote. The children of the wealthier classes are in no better position in

this respect than the children of the poor. The New Testament is not taught at present in any English school on the basis of existing knowledge.

So the popular religion disengages itself more and more from the Faith's historical foundations. These foundations are unseen and not looked for. People may continue to tell us that if this or that historical fact were to be disproved, the whole fabric of their faith would be undermined. I sometimes ask those who use this language to point to one thing they now do, which if the supposed contingency were to happen they would cease to do, or even to one real and potent hope which would then have been shattered.

It is to this unbiblical, or at least extra-biblical, religion the preacher in church must appeal. The establishment, the correction, or it may be even the demolition, of this religion is his aim and object. The instrument put into his hands for these purposes is the New Testament.

The New Testament was called into being by the appearance in the world of one whom all Christians venerate as the author and finisher of their Faith. It describes what is known of His life. It contains all, or nearly all, His recorded words, and the comments upon those words and applications of them made by the two earliest generations of His disciples. By the side of this primitive testimony the preacher places his own religion and that of his listeners, as we place a copy by the side of its original.

His task here, however, is by no means that of the interpreter of a written law. He is not in the position of a Jewish scribe or an English judge. A text even from the Gospels is not accepted by a present-day worshipper as an irreversible verdict. He is convinced largely by the sins of us clergy that the Bible may be made to mean anything the interpreter wishes. The mere text is unconvincing to him unless it comes to him as the echo of his own highest experience, and calls forth his heartfelt amen.

The student of the New Testament must recognize this scepticism as having ample justification. The deeper his studies go the more he is impressed by the difficulty of dis-

covering in any given case what Christ did really say or mean. The different forms given to the same saying in different gospels, the possibilities of misconception in translating from the original Aramaic into the Greek, the variations of the different Greek MSS., and, above all, the desire to edify, in which the composition of the Gospels had its origin, make the recovery of the Master's actual words always difficult, and often impossible. We have to hesitate when we should like to be positive.

It is evident, too, that the church's teachers from the very outset allowed themselves great liberties in interpreting the Master's words. If we consider what the procedure of that inspired philosopher whom the Church calls St. John implies, we perceive that the Saviour's words must have been thought of from the outset as fluid, elastic, adaptable to the Church's changing needs. The other Gospels bear the same witness. The evangelists think edification far more important than exegetical fidelity. They sometimes find opposite meanings in the same saying. Reflect, *e.g.*, upon the difficulty of pronouncing positively upon the attitude of Christ towards the Jewish law, a central point in the evangelic history. On one occasion we find Him uttering a principle which cut away this whole law from its roots ("Not that which entereth into the mouth defileth"). Elsewhere He bids His disciples observe the law, and says that not one tittle of it shall fall to the ground. I do not say that the two sets of passages are irreconcileable. The reconciliation, however, is by no means simple. Our Lord evidently did not define His attitude to the law of His people with rigorous exactitude, nor was He careful of logical consistency.

Thus the preacher of to-day cannot take the hallowed words and make their superficial meaning the basis of his teaching. Before he appeals to the teaching of Christ he must honestly try to discover what this teaching was, and to allow for the intercepting media through which it has passsd in its transmission to us. This critical labour of his must, of course, be for the most part unseen. It cannot be done in the pulpit, although the sermon must rest upon it.

It is only when he has satisfied himself as far as he can upon the character and original meaning of the words with which he proposes to deal that his religious teaching begins. Study and criticism should bring him into the presence of the eternal Christ, whose voice awakens an echo in every human breast, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. The words of the Gospels should stand out in his mind, not in the nakedness of their original application, but illuminated and enriched by the experience which has gathered round them since they were uttered. He must pass through the local and the temporary to the universal.

I am expressing, I believe, more than my individual experience when I say that the first stages of this progress are generally disquieting. When we contemplate the sacred words in their first setting the moral we had hoped to find in them is often not there. We find they were intended for a situation which has no counterpart in the modern world, and they do not yield the direction for which we expressly crave.

How futile, *e.g.*, to appeal to the New Testament either for the sanction or the condemnation of international war. The duties of nations form no part of the teaching of Christ. It is not just to say that nations in making war upon each other have violated His injunctions, for He gave them no injunctions. His words are all addressed to individuals. Thus national duty has never been and could not be determined by the words severed from the experience by which they have been subsequently illuminated.

This is true of most of the problems incidental to our modern life. They cannot be solved by confining our attention to the original meaning of the Gospel sayings. We must look beyond this to the light thrown upon them by the ages which followed. The Quaker thought that he could regulate his conduct by the letter of the Gospel precepts. He came to the conclusion, wrongly perhaps, that judicial oaths were forbidden him and he succeeded in avoiding them, but he was not able to avoid laying up treasure upon earth. Superficial critics are

always telling us that we must go back through the centuries to Christ. If they mean by this that we must separate the hallowed words from the subsequent course of history, they are only asking us to repeat the mistake of the Quaker or the Plymouth Brethren.

Look at what have been called the economic sayings of the Gospel. These sayings were the condemnation of a society where wealth had become the accepted symbol of covetousness and rapacity, and godly fear was rarely found outside the homes of the poor. They were the proclamation to this society of its impending doom, a call to those who had ears to hear to leave it and to shun the contamination of its rewards. We may, if we please, draw the moral that riches are to be spurned whenever they have become as they were here in Palestine, the wages of iniquity. But this is a truth so obvious that not the idlest of the rich would think of calling it in question.

Where shall we find the real message of Christ to the wealthy? Not in the economic sayings of the Gospels alone, but in those sayings illuminated and enriched by subsequent Christian experience. We have called to our aid the teachings of future years, the examples of poor men in many times and places who became rich, and rich men who for Christ's sake became poor, and we may find ourselves acquiescing in the end with a good conscience in the conclusions of the political economist.

The letter killeth, the spirit giveth life. The words of the Redeemer were germs cast upon the seedfield of time. If we would make them the foundation of our faith, and use them for our religious needs, we must not separate them from the history they have helped to shape, the consciousness they have helped to form. They were never intended to resemble that Jewish Law which they displaced, to stand above subsequent experience and supersede its necessity. They were not so regarded in the primitive Church. St. Matthew did not thus think of them, nor St. Luke, nor St. John. Nor should we. We must not think of studying them apart from the honest

and good heart into which they entered and where they have borne fruit a hundredfold.

If we seek for one short summary of the Lord's teaching, one universal truth to which it all points, the Apostle offers us what we seek when he bids us look not to the things seen but to the things unseen.

By the things unseen I understand him to mean not a supersensual world, but the reality which is within our reach here and now, but which we commonly miss because it is hidden from us by the veil of custom and the false standard of values we use. To perceive this reality and to hold fast to it, is to lay up treasure in heaven, to labour for the meat which endureth, to be independent of the transitory world.

I conclude, then, that the object of all religious teaching of the New Testament, and any other sort of teaching is out of place in Church, is to bring the learner into the presence of that universal Christ whom the Apostle declared to be not above nor beneath, but within us. The first step on the way to this goal is a candid and critical study of the book. Such study will direct the teacher into the pathway his thoughts should follow. He is bound to tell his hearers what the words with which he deals do really mean in their original sense, although, of course, he cannot fully expose the process by which he has reached his results. Still, he is bound to be a faithful expositor of the book which he and his hearers alike regard as sacred and authoritative. It is not he who teaches. The Spirit who inspired the New Testament teaches through him. Exposition, however, is only a means to an end. An historical disquisition is not a religious discourse. An exegetical investigation cannot save the soul. These are but steps on the way to the Eternal Christ, who is not confined within the narrow room of His recorded utterances, but who speaks over and above these utterances in language clear and irresistible to the human soul. It is to Him the New Testament is intended to lead us. This is the goal we should keep in sight, and not stop at any intermediate point on the way.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

By Nowell Smith, M.A., Headmaster of Sherborne.

I accepted an invitation to read you a paper on the teaching of the New Testament with great diffidence and hesitation.

Not only have I no title-deeds to your attention, but my position as a headmaster was positively the reverse of a recommendation. I can well imagine the trenchant way in which my friend Canon Rashdall, if not restrained by personal kindness, might deal with the historical or theological errors of a modern headmaster, no longer, as he ought to be, the ἀρχιδιδάσκαλος, but a sort of compound of hotel-manager, athletic trainer, and career-expert, a *monstrum* neither *horrendum* perhaps, nor certainly *ingens*, but *informe*, and beyond a doubt *cui lumen ademptum!* It is indeed true that the modern headmaster, unless he neglects his paramount duty, has little time according to academic standards for teaching or for study. But I think the university student and teacher is apt to make the same mistake which the regular soldier made in time of peace about the territorial or the old-fashioned volunteer. He is apt to see no difference between a little teaching and a little study, and no teaching or study at all. Moreover, I have been conscious, both at a conference of history teachers which I lately attended, and on other occasions, that the devotees of any particular subject of education, whether it be history or science or modern languages, or even classics, regard headmasters as their natural enemies, much in the same way as in war the belligerents, if they agree in nothing else, agree in condemning the unsympathetic attitude of neutrals. I know that this conference would repudiate the title of a conference of specialists. We meet as a number of men and women in various walks of life united by the one purpose of strengthening our hold upon the realities of Christianity, that we may each in our degrees and circumstances be better witnesses of the truth in Christ Jesus. But while freely admitting my claim to come among you as an enquirer,

you might, I think, very reasonably wonder whether a modern headmaster, who has not even undergone the theological training imposed upon a candidate for Holy Orders, was likely to have anything informing or suggestive to contribute to your consideration of the teaching of the New Testament.

I certainly share any such doubts. Whatever my audience may think, I myself know perfectly well that I am not an expert in Biblical studies, nor a New Testament teacher of any long experience. In fact, it is only as an enquirer rather than as a teacher, as an experimenter rather than an expert, that I come before you to initiate a discussion, putting forward a point of view for which, however familiar and amateurish it may seem to some of you, I can at least claim originality in the sense that I find myself there in the course of practical experience rather than as a disciple of any special school.

Under these circumstances I hope that you will discount the apparent egotism, not only of the preceding remarks, but of my whole treatment of the subject. A personal treatment is inevitable. I cannot with impersonal authoritativeness give you the fruits of special studies; for I have made no studies deserving the name of special. I cannot lay down ascertained principles; for I am only feeling after them in the very limited opportunities that I get amidst numberless distractions. All I can do—and I hope it may not be altogether unfruitful—is to give you the experience of one who, after receiving the ordinary education of public school and university, and spending some fifteen years in secular, mainly classical, teaching and literary studies, found himself suddenly called upon, at a few weeks' notice, to add New Testament teaching to the numerous other totally new responsibilities laid upon him.

Now, needless to say, when I found myself confronted with this duty, I keenly regretted that I had not made myself a competent Biblical scholar, just as when this present war broke out I bitterly regretted that I had not trained myself as a competent soldier. At the same time I must guard against a possible misunderstanding, and in doing so make the first

point which occurs to me as important in connection with my subject. Although I had never devoted to the Bible or to Biblical criticism and kindred subjects anything deserving the name of serious study, in the sense in which as a teacher I understand that expression, yet I was far from being uninterested in these matters. Indeed I looked forward to being compelled to teach and study the Bible—I was going to say the New Testament, but that would not be quite correct, though I had in mind very especially the New Testament—with a keenness which overbore all my sense of ignorance. Ever since the moral struggles of boyhood and the stimulus received during that period from the New Testament teaching of my headmaster, Dr. Fearon, I had as a practical man and a pilgrim of the world realised the unique value of the Bible, while a very strong passion for literature had naturally led to my being passably familiar with the language of our glorious English version. I had also—though I am naturally rather shy of confessing to what seems usually to be regarded as a symptom of intellectual feebleness—I had always enjoyed hearing and reading sermons; and I had taken such interest of a desultory kind in theological and critical questions as was likely to be awakened in a layman of more or less religious habit of mind living the life of a University teacher. I mention these facts merely to shew that while I was totally unprepared to march into a class room and deliver any authoritative pronouncement at all upon any portion of the Bible, yet my mind was not a mere blank on the subject, but had, as it were, some rudimentary feelers ready to seize upon ideas and information which actual study could collect.

Now the first point which emerges from this recollection of my experience as a middle-aged beginner of New Testament teaching is the importance of having a practical interest in the subject. I would emphasise the word "practical," though indeed it would not be superfluous to speak of the need of a teacher having an interest of whatever kind. Look at the matter in the concrete. There are thousands of boys in public

schools all over the country—I confine myself to the sphere of education with which I am familiar, though of course the problems are partly the same in girls' schools and in all schools, elementary as well as secondary—there are thousands of schoolboys who are to receive New Testament teaching. Convention demands it, and we believe that their welfare demands it too. The upshot is that roughly speaking all Form masters, except in the rare cases where they express conscientious objections, teach New Testament, as well as Old Testament, Latin, History, and whatever else in any particular school comes under the heading of Form subjects. Now, although it is a commonplace that nobody can teach a subject well unless he takes an interest in it, it is inevitable that there should be a great variety of degrees of interest felt by ordinary schoolmasters in the different subjects they are called upon to teach; and in many cases conscientious and practical goodwill towards pupils have to compensate as they may for lack of interest in a subject itself. But in New Testament teaching, as it is the most important of all subjects, so the interest of the teacher is more essential than in any other subject; while at the same time that interest must be inextricably bound up with what I have called practical goodwill towards pupils or, in other words, the pastoral motive. It is quite possible to take a very keen but purely critical interest, or purely historical, or purely linguistic interest in the New Testament—I would even add a purely theological interest—without any moral or practical interest in it at all. The reconstruction of Q and the Ur-Marcus, the chronology of St. Paul's life, the uses of prepositions in Hellenistic Greek, even the doctrine of the Trinity—studies in such subjects as these may be pursued with enthusiasm by men who feel no call to commend the Gospel to others as the guide and support of conscious life. But although what I may call in general an intellectual enthusiasm for the subject is highly desirable and indeed necessary for a first-rate teacher of the New Testament, as of any other subject, it will not compensate for the absence of a burning

conviction that, for teachers and taught, here, in the New Testament, are "words of eternal life."

Not that, by the way, the functions of teacher and preacher should be confused. To turn the divinity lesson into a sermon is a sure way to seal up the avenues to a schoolboy's interest, while I believe the converse is also true, viz., that the preacher to young people who uses the pulpit as a vehicle for imparting information instead of exhortation, warning, encouragement, is missing his opportunity. In either case "the hungry sheep look up and are not fed" with the nutriment appropriate to their needs. To the schoolboy the chapel is one thing, and the class room is another; and after all he is perfectly right in the distinction, though the religious teacher should never lose sight of the spiritual life that should inspire and unite them.

Now it is not the work of this conference to attempt to estimate how many school teachers of the New Testament are sincere Christians or religiously minded persons. You may even think that I am over-labouring a truism in emphasising the importance of a practical interest or a religious bent of mind in a teacher of the New Testament. But I believe that we may hold out a helping hand to teachers, and so do something towards building up a more lively faith in coming generations, by setting this truism in a proper light. I believe that the importance of religious faith to a teacher of the Bible is a bugbear to large numbers of teachers at the present time instead of a stimulus. And the reason is that we are still so much enslaved to a mechanical view of religious faith.

Of course, worldliness is now, as it always must be, by far the most powerful enemy of faith. And looking at society at large, we may say that organised Christianity, in spite of all its corruptions and its commerce with the mammon of unrighteousness, has held up before men's eyes a spiritual ideal; and that in the age-long war of Christ and the world, the mortal tendency of communities to bind with formularies and shibboleths has been more than compensated by the divine energy of the Spirit that sets free. But worldliness is not the arch-enemy of

teachers as teachers. If contact with young life and responsibility for its guidance does not at least open the soul of a teacher to spiritual influences,—well, he has so utterly mistaken his vocation that it is useless to consider him as a teacher at all. No, the commonest enemy of the average teacher of the Bible, at least in public schools, is, I believe, the phantom of orthodoxy. I say "the phantom," because orthodoxy is a something-nothing which terrifies some and consoles others, but is in itself nowhere to be found. Apart from the great divisions of Christendom, even within one branch of the Church like the Church of England, the orthodoxy of one party is the heresy of another, the heresy of one age becomes the orthodoxy of another. And yet to us laymen at least orthodoxy is a name of dread. The clergy perhaps hardly understand this. Starting with their churchmanship guaranteed, as it were, by their cloth, they bandy ecclesiastical and theological arguments with a freedom and in a tone which are often appalling to the layman, who has been in the habit of regarding religion, from a distance it is true, but with reverential awe. The theological expert or the ecclesiastic has not many qualms about identifying orthodoxy with his own opinions; but the layman, conscious of ignorance, has the uncomfortable feeling that the chances are very much against *his* opinions being orthodox. Hence, while you may sometimes find a clerical master, especially in his youth, cheerfully enunciating theories that would split any General Council, you will certainly find many a conscientious layman doling out second-hand theology and exegesis to the infinite boredom of himself and his class, from sheer terror of betraying his trust as an instructor of youth by daring to form an opinion of his own in the forbidden region of religion.

Now I am anxious not to exaggerate the defectiveness of our New Testament teaching. I am quite sure it very often is exaggerated, especially by some of my ecclesiastical friends. It is very easy for them to wax merry or indignant, according to temperament, over our ignorance of the dogmatic history of the first six centuries (I think six is the sacred number), and

our unfamiliarity even with many of the terms both of ecclesiastical and theological theory. It is very easy to put a pistol at the head of the poor layman with the question "Do you believe in the Virgin Birth?" and then when he is frightened out of his wits and begins to stammer out something which is not a plain "yes" or "no," to go away snorting that you can't expect Christianity to get hold of the masses when the sons of the classes are taught by invertebrate Laodiceans. It is not so easy, as they acknowledge, to suggest a remedy, though they do from time to time rather pathetically declare that the divinity teaching at school ought to be placed only in the hands of men who will honestly impart what they call "definite Church teaching." Pathetically, because definite Church teaching is the same phantom as orthodoxy. At no point in history can one stop and say, "Here is Truth completely defined and expressed in human language." You may impart the formulae of an older age—not merely historically, for of course we all can and should do that on proper occasions, but dogmatically as "necessary to salvation." Whether you can do so honestly or not does not depend upon your Christianity or your faith in the God who is our Father. It depends upon your type of mind, however that type may have been formed. And it is quite evident that the type requisite for imparting with sincerity and enthusiasm anything that would be called "definite Church teaching" by the people who desiderate that, is not common in the ranks of secondary teachers.

Fortunately the demand for more dogmatic teaching of the New Testament is not only doomed to failure; it is also, I believe, mistaken. Even as things are I believe that the teaching of the New Testament which boys receive at our public schools has, in general, more religious effect, a greater influence in the direction of Christianity, than is easily realised by fervent ecclesiastics. And the defects in that teaching, which certainly exist, will only be remedied by a greater vitality, a keener practical interest on the part of the teacher, which, in its turn, can only co-exist with that same spirit of free enquiry which is the life-breath of all true teaching.

Here, let me confess, I am on the brink of the deep sea of metaphysics, and a philosophical Jesuit could, if he thought it worth while, easily push me into deep waters. Free enquiry pushed to its logical extreme ends in pure scepticism. I remember, as an undergraduate, feeling that the world even of ideas was crumbling to pieces when a friend of mine, then a mathematical scholar and now a distinguished metaphysician, denied the validity of the definition of parallel straight lines. He said, if I remember right, after all these years, that if produced to infinity they might meet! And quite apart from any historical difficulties in the New Testament, you cannot attempt to follow up any train of reasoning suggested by words of moral import, such as "sin," without soon finding yourself among the antinomies of reason, like that group of fallen angels who

> "reason'd high
> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> Fixt fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost."

I withdraw from this brink with this mere acknowledgement of its existence, because in point of fact these metaphysical mazes interfere with very few of us in active life. They may perplex us in certain moods, they may—they might indeed more often!—mitigate the tones of our polemics; but most of us are content to leave them where Aristotle tolerated the improbabilities of the story of Oedipus, "outside the drama." And if they are to anyone "a presence not to be put by," he is not likely to undertake the office of teaching the New Testament at school.

I repeat, then, that what we want in our New Testament teaching at school is greater vitality, a keener practical interest on the part of the teacher. We want the teacher himself to feel that the study of the records of Christ's life and teaching, of the birth and growth of Christianity, of the thought of St. Paul and others who lived in the midst of that unique religious movement, is of priceless value to himself, to his spiritual life, to his outlook upon the world and his conduct in the world. If he feels this—I say nothing of course about general aptitude

for teaching; we are not discussing that, and I simply take it for granted—if the teacher feels what I have described, then his teaching will be alive and will kindle or feed the flame in his disciples. And this infectious enthusiasm can only exist if the teacher's own studies are animated by the free spirit of enquiry. Mere assent to second-hand dogma without personal assimilation must produce, not a living and missionary faith, but either indifference or insincerity or both.

Now this is where I hope that the work of the Churchmen's Union will come in. It is not that there is or has been in the past any real lack of Churchmen devoted to "the cause of Truth, Freedom, and Progress in the National Church" (to quote the programme of your magazine), whose lives and writings are a guide and inspiration to those of us who are fortunate or active enough to seek them. Such men are to be found in many different quarters, and are claimed, often with more zeal than understanding, by very different parties in the Church. But organised Churchmanship inevitably tends towards the imposition of shibboleths in the shape of stereotyped formulae. The average man or woman unaccustomed to independent religious thinking of any kind, accepts these much in the same way as Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" accepted the discourses of his parson:—

> "An' I niver knaw'd what a meän'd, but I
> thowt a 'ad summut to saäy
> An I thowt a said what a owt to 'a said,
> an' I coom'd awaäy."

But to persons of greater intellectual activity, among whom all teachers in any degree worthy of the name must certainly be classed, these formulae or definitions present themselves as matter for thought, often as difficulties—and seeing that they have exercised many of the acutest minds of Christendom in all ages, this is not to be wondered at.

Now the supposed attitude of orthodox or official Churchmanship, the attitude perceived or fancied by the layman, is somewhat of the "Take it or leave it" kind. And the lay teacher, poor honest man, is not prepared to "take it," to swallow

tremendous terms like Atonement, Redemption, or extraordinary facts like the Incarnation, just like a child obediently swallowing something out of a bottle which nurse or parent declare is good for it. And so very often he "leaves it" all to the parsons, to his own and his pupils' great loss. He is not necessarily irreligious or even consciously agnostic. But he is afraid to stir up his own religious consciousness, and in consequence how can he stir up the religious consciousness of others?

To such men—and my own experience convinces me that there are many of them—the Churchmen's Union, if it succeeds in establishing itself as a living aud powerful organ of Christian thought, will afford just the shelter and encouragement which their rather shy and (let us admit) unheroic "feeling after God" requires. It will lend them moral support in that conviction, which is second nature to the true teacher, that Truth is not something static, something to be handed down in unchanging definitions and learned by rote, but an ideal always beckoning us on, always beyond our human grasp, yet never betraying us if we follow where it leads.

I have not attempted to exhaust the subject of New Testament teaching. I have said nothing of methods, of choice of topics, of the art of teaching at all. I did not suppose that we have met for that purpose. I have tried to indicate rather a point of view, and to express my sympathy as a practical teacher with the movement of which this conference is one manifestation. There is only one other question which I must deal with, the familiar question whether I am not afraid of unsettling the minds of my pupils. Clearly we must not leave out the pupils! And here again I must ask you to forgive the egotism of basing my remarks upon a personal experience. Not long ago I heard from a parent totally unknown to me, who happened to have read a sympathetic review of a volume of sermons I had published, who had thereupon bought and read the sermons with—or possibly to—his wife, and was now desirous of calling upon me with a view to entrusting his only son to my care—a flattering result I had never contemplated

when I ventured into publication! Any vanity that was awakened by this unusual application was, however, soon extinguished. The parents came, an elderly retired Irish soldier and his wife, of an evident, though somewhat melancholy, piety. Without any beating about the bush, they explained that by far the most important, indeed the only important consideration in their eyes, was the religious tone of the school to which they should entrust the hope of their life—what a welcome change from the almost universal stress laid upon food, sanitation, and "my boy has a decided bent for engineering, Mr. Smith; he knows far more about this motor-car than I do myself!"—and, *therefore*, before going any further they sought an assurance from me that "no Higher Criticism" was taught in my school! What was I to say? I collapsed at once. I think I said feebly that it depended upon what Higher Criticism meant. At any rate, "the subsequent proceedings interested us no more," and shortly afterwards they took their leave, with a kindly sorrow, I hope, rather than loathing for the wolf who had assumed the cloak of those blameless sermons! In a few days they wrote me a kind letter saying that they had received the assurance they sought from the headmaster of a well-known school, a personal friend of my own,—a man no doubt quite as honest and enlightened as myself, but also, as I judge from this episode, apter in answering a fool according to his folly.

Now I would not have told this little story if I did not feel sure that it is full of matter for thought. I will not insult you by pointing its moral; but will conclude by shortly declaring my firm belief that there is no danger to one's pupils in the attitude I have attempted to describe except such as is inseparable from any and every human activity. The dangers of bigotry and formalism, of obscurantism and indifference, are not merely dangers; they are disasters. There is no need to waste words on them. But to the person who asks: "Are you not afraid of unsettling the minds of your pupils?" I am tempted to answer: "Afraid? No! I hope I do." How can a living faith grow up

in the mind of a man or a woman unless the soil of the mind is dug, and trenched, and watered, and fortified with nourishment? My sole object in teaching the New Testament is to help others, as well as myself, to assimilate the revelation of God which it contains, or to which rather it bears witness, to make it an actual part of our lives, and not merely a Sunday volume which is supposed to exert some magical influence with no co-operation of our own intelligence. And this is my object, whether the pupils be sixth-form scholars, quite alive whether we like it or no to the various intellectual tendencies of their day, or younger boys, or even children. But a teacher of the New Testament does not, one hopes, leave his common sense behind him on Sundays, and actually strew his pupils' path with stones of stumbling for the mere pleasure of shewing his own agility. In discussing the problem of New Testament teaching in connection with the controversies and questionings of our time, we necessarily pay almost exclusive attention to the difficulties, to what I may call perhaps the negative side. Let us never forget, however, that in practice there is the positive side with its almost infinite opportunities; there is the adaptability of the New Testament to every age of life, to every stage of mental and spiritual growth. So long as we do not allow, even from the best of motives, any insincerity, any juggling with terms, to creep into our teaching, so long as we are ready to admit the limitation of our knowledge and the tentative character of human definitions of the Divine and the Infinite, then whether we are telling the story of the Gospel to children, or illustrating the teaching of Jesus to schoolboys, or wrestling with St. Paul's thought in partnership with young men—to take typical, though by no means mutually exclusive, stages of New Testament teaching—we may hope, with all our limitations, to be, according to the measure of the light vouchsafed, "fellow-workers with God" in building up a living Church to be ever more and more the faithful witness to His government of the world and His fatherhood of the souls that He has created.

THE CREEDS AND THEIR TEACHING.

By C. Norwood, M.A., Litt.D., Headmaster of Bristol Grammar School.

It is certainly incumbent upon me to speak upon this subject and before this audience with all humility, since I have no theological training behind me, and have come to this conference with no thought of instructing, but in the hope of learning. And indeed the only reason why in these circumstances I have consented to read a paper upon this subject is, that I belong to that class of educated laymen into whose hands the religious and moral training of the coming generation tends to fall more and more, that I have year by year practical experience of the question, and that therefore from this practical point of view my evidence may be of value.

So far as the schools are concerned, those who know them cannot but feel that great opportunities are being missed, because the difficulties are many, and arise both from the character of the teachers and the taught. In the great majority of cases the teachers are laymen who feel themselves devoid of specialist equipment for the task, who feel moreover, when they go to church, that they seldom, if ever, receive guidance from the clergy upon these particular questions. And further, though in most cases a conscience clause exists in the schemes governing the schools, the power of withdrawal under it is rarely exercised by the parents, who, in secondary schools at anyrate, are so indifferent that no religious difficulty exists from their side; a class therefore is denominationally of very mixed composition, and I have known in them both boys who called themselves Jews and boys who called themselves Roman Catholics. The tendency is therefore to play for safety. The Old and New Testament are treated as history; a knowledge of the facts is required; a certain amount of formal repetition is demanded. The creeds are never touched, and the only living

teaching that is attempted is entirely ethical. Meanwhile a hundred questions are arising in the minds of the adolescent boys who undergo this routine, but they are ignored or evaded; the children ask for bread, and they receive a stone.

Meanwhile the teaching in all other school subjects is constantly improving; in particular there has been great advance for a good number of years past in the teaching of history and of historical method, and equally in the teaching of the general laws and the general method of science. The teacher affects to keep these subjects apart from the Scripture teaching in separate official compartments, but just as he cannot really do it, so neither do the boys. Unguided they apply the methods of modern history and science to the Scripture narrative, and they find many difficulties. They grow up and leave school to swell the ever-growing numbers of educated laymen who are out of sympathy with the churches, and are so often hastily labelled agnostic or free-thinking, when they are, as a matter of fact, nothing of the sort. They are the new wine, and the Church, as they seem to know it, is the old bottle that cannot contain them.

It was Bishop Wescott who said that "formulas which in earlier times seemed to declare the Gospel adequately no longer cover the facts of the world as they have been revealed to us in these later days;" it was he who advised the facing of such difficulties in the frankest spirit as the condition through which we shall be brought to know God better. If this spirit existed in the schools, and if this spirit existed among the clergy, I have no doubt that the great majority of those who are now said to be lost to the Churches would be saved. And this seems to me to constitute the vital importance of our subject, and to offer a great hope that the labours of the Churchmen's Union may be fruitful indeed in the building of the Body of the Church.

But my task, as I understand it, is in the main the practical question how to teach the Creeds, and it must be sufficient to have said so much as to the spirit and the hope in which we

should go about the work. In this matter much, if not all, will depend upon the age of those who are to be taught, and in the case of young children up to the age of 14 or 15, I think that it would be enough if the Apostles' Creed were learned by heart, and if thereto were added the Church Catechism, with special emphasis laid upon its teaching as to the Creed and as to the Commandments. For the rest the true context of our religious teaching must be drawn directly from the Bible, and particularly from the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, for unless this foundation is well and truly laid, everything will fail and lose its meaning. Therefore, if I am asked what of the Creed I would specially seek to impart to the young, I answer the belief in the Fatherhood of God, in our Redemption in and through Jesus Christ, in our sanctification in and through the Holy Spirit. It is the answer which is made by the Church Catechism, and it is the right answer; these are the beliefs which we chiefly learn. The mistake lies with those who seek to force prematurely on the young other articles of the Creed which we do not chiefly learn, and who elevate them to an importance greater than that of the true and grand foundations of our faith.

During the next two years of a child's life I would seek to develop this teaching more particularly as to the nature of the operation of the Holy Spirit. I take it that the main efforts in these years will be to increase always the knowledge of the spiritual and ethical teaching of the Gospels, but along with this I should try to implant a first conception of the ideals implied by the Holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints. For it is at this point that the secondary education of a very great number of boys and girls comes to an end; it is at this point that the majority seek Confirmation. I would endeavour to unite the teaching of the Fourth Gospel with that of St. Paul, more particularly in the Epistle to the Ephesians, that even then the children may have some conception of what St. Paul means by that ideal Church when we shall "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of

God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." They will then have some standard by which to estimate the value of our sectarian animosities and of the spirit which animates our party politics and our social system.

I do not think that difficulties as to the Creeds arise before this age, at any rate with boys, and I do not myself think it wise to attempt to forestall them. You are merely imparting verbal information which attaches itself to nothing real in the boy's mind. But with clever boys about 16, with most boys about 17, these difficulties do arise, and when they come, come very quickly. It has been my habit not only in scripture reading, but still more in essay writing, to encourage boys to write freely whatever is in their hearts, and I know that with boys, both in the classical and the modern side, these difficulties do occur with very considerable regularity about this time. It is at this stage that the question should be faced, and a frank and reverent attempt be made to indicate the lines along which thought may proceed without loss of vital truth, or danger to religious life and fellowship.

It seems to me that it is necessary to lay down some general principles at the outset before any attempt is made to enter into the consideration of details. In the first place it is necessary to say what the Creeds are, and to show by their history that they originate from certain General Councils. But the basis and standard of all truth are for us members of the Church of England Holy Scripture, by the most certain warrants of which the three Creeds may be proved as the VIIIth Article declares. Holy Scripture therefore being for us the final standard, it follows that if in the light of much fuller knowledge we are compelled to re-interpret and to re-value much that is therein written, the same re-interpretation must apply to the Creeds, which are not of equal or higher authority, but derivative. In the second place it is necessary to lay down and illustrate the general law which was so admirably explained by Professor Sanday in his article, "On Continuity of Thought and Relativity

of Expression," in the June number of *The Modern Churchman.* We must show that there is and has been continuity of thought, the object being ever the same, the seeking to know God in and through Christ. We must shew that there is and must be relativity of expression, since every age works with the best equipment which it can find, often with new tools, and from a new side. And we must illustrate this, and show that this is so not only in the history of our Christian religion, but in all human activities of thought. Then, in the third place, I would emphasize what I believe to be the truth, that we are dealing with a subject in regard to which affirmation is far more weighty than denial. Professor Sanday had this, I think, in his mind when he said he would be no party to putting "nots" into the Creeds. Archbishop Temple more than fifty years ago had also much the same in his mind when he looked forward to a dogmatic theology of the future, which would in large part consist of distinct refusals to define, adding that it was a dogmatism hitherto never practised by the Church. What is true for one is not true in the same way for another, and what is a fact of vivid experience to one is to a second a matter of hearsay only. It is not possible for one person to have equal knowledge and equal experience of everything. And therefore it is wise at the outset to put these considerations clearly before young and enthusiastic thinkers, in order that they may not hastily enter into such denials, and in order that they may be patient of more than one interpretation.

Having laid down these general introductory principles with such clearness and fullness of illustration as might be possible, I would go on to deal with such a document as the Apostles' Creed clause by clause, and I should insist that all the clauses are not of equal importance, but that some lie at the base of all, some, and those the most debated and controverted, in the nature of outworks, if you like, at any rate not vital to the whole in the sense that the first are. It is not superfluous, it is of the utmost urgency, to insist, as Canon Rashdall at the Ripon Conference last year urged that we should do, that the most important Article of the Apostles' Creed is the first—"I believe

in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth." And indissolubly coupled with this goes the second clause—"and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord." The question will immediately arise in the minds of some at anyrate of your hearers, though it may remain unexpressed, in what sense is Jesus Christ God and the Son of God? And it will be wise, I think to attempt to answer this question without reference to the supernatural birth, or actions, or resurrection. These are known to the taught, and the knowledge of them may be assumed. It will be prudent to indicate the deductions from Old Testament prophecy, and several Jewish and Alexandrine lines of thought which I need not particularise, which went to make the acceptance of Jesus as the Son of God easy for the men of that time; and here again I think it will be inadvisable to lay stress on these as likely to carry conviction of themselves to young minds of our own day. The proof lies gathered for us not only in the success of the appeal which He made in His own ministry, not only in the unquestioned acceptance by the early Church, and later by the whole Western world, but in the nineteen hundred years of experience which have accrued to us since. This, the supreme, and to me the unanswerable, evidence is too often ignored or passed over, but the proof lies there in history, that age after age has found in Christ the supreme Revealer, the only Son of God, and that individual souls without number have found in Him the same, and find Him the same to-day.

Along this line of thought we pass naturally to the third supremely important clause: "I believe in the Holy Ghost," Whose operation in the Church we shall already have been studying, as we have traced the witness of successive ages to God through Christ and recognised the vital importance for each of those ages of the knowledge and love which they have so gained. I would develop the teaching implied in the clause by dwelling on St. Paul's phrase, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and, if I had time, I would seek to bring it into relation with our own divisions of the present day, between

church and church, between class and class, between nation and nation, and to show how far and in how many divisions our present level of performance falls short both of our professions and of the ideal.

It is natural and easy in relation to this to proceed to the conception involved in the clauses naming the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints, and on these I need not dwell, nor need I say much as to the belief in the Forgiveness of Sins and the Life Everlasting, which I would take next. I do not mean that I would slur them over in school teaching, but only for our present purpose they need not detain us. In connection with the article as to the Forgiveness of Sins, I should personally lay the utmost stress on the moral and spiritual teaching of Christ, which seems to me to have proved His Divinity to His own generation, and in the results which have followed, and do follow it, to prove it to us, and I would show how He, the Good Shepherd, laid stress on the long-suffering and loving kindness of the Father in such ways as the world had hitherto never conceived.

With this I should end the discussion of what seem to me the most vital matters, and shall say that there remain several clauses which are of less importance in that they refer to the mode in which Christ was manifested on earth, and that these as formulated in the Creeds were the most adequate representation possible in human language in those days, and seemed indeed, and were, perfectly natural statements of truth as recorded in Holy Scripture, and that they remain for many, and perhaps the majority, still the best, the truest, and the most natural statements. But since it is the consequence of the position which we have taken that, as knowledge increases, and new points of view come within our range, the old truths can and must be restated, all those articles of the Creed are capable of more than one interpretation, and that in all of them there is an outer husk of verbal statement which is of its own age and time, and an inner kernel of essential truth which is of all ages and for all time.

Many, I should say, accept in the literal sense that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, but there are others who on the one hand consider the historical evidence as weak, and such as in any other matter would result in a verdict of "not proven," and on the other hand find a difficulty in the introduction of a miracle which to them seems unnecessary, and in a sense primitive and crude. To such minds it is not the historical fact that matters; it is the Incarnation as a supreme spiritual fact, which is the article of the faith, to which our attention is claimed. There are few in the present day who will quarrel with the possibility, as Professor Sanday phrases it, of the direct influx of Deity into Manhood, since those who believe in God at all believe in some community of nature between the human and the Divine, and to these the great fact of the Incarnation, if they are not called upon to swear to the literal truth of the words of a human formula, seems to bring God near in a very real sense.

In a similar spirit one would approach the great fact of the Resurrection. Whether on the third day the physical body of Christ arose from the tomb and appeared, and in what way it appeared, are matters which, as literal historical facts, are in debate: to many they seem perfectly natural and easy of belief, taken in their most literal sense. But others feel that it is not the empty tomb which proves the truth of Christianity, but a far mightier and more convincing sign which we have, and the earliest Christians could not have, the sign that every century which passes proves more and more that Christ is not dead but risen, since more and more it indicates the truth of all the claims which He made. To some this will seem unsubstantial, unreal; but to others in difficulty and doubt it will open many doors, and will give them a purer light and a securer faith than they knew in earlier days of literal interpretation.

It is impossible for me at the end of this paper to discuss such questions fully, or in anything but the most meagre outline, but I would re-emphasize the need that exists always of affirming and not denying. It is the affirmation of the great truths of

the Incarnation and the Resurrection which I would emphasize the whole time, in whatever modes we may individually conceive events to have taken place. It will not be difficult in a similar way to deal with the essential truth contained in the proposition that Christ ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. There is the literal interpretation which involves crude miracle, and a different conception of the physical universe to that which we possess to-day; there is the intepretation which, recognizing the limitation of human knowledge at any one time, and the petrifaction to which human formulae are liable in the process of time, goes behind the phrase to the essential truth. And this reflection upon the limitation of knowledge and language will prevent us from finding difficulty in the Descent into Hell, and the Resurrection of the Body.

And I would end by saying that our greatest need is unity, and that this view of the teaching of the Creeds, this interpretation of the verities of the Christian faith, is all in the direction of simplifying difficulties and unifying thought. If we must each of us assert that our own definition as to the mode in which these things happened in the world is alone correct, and that we can have no communion save with those who think as we do, then is there indeed an end to hope both "for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ." But if we are ready to accept each other's affirmations, and to recognise that the human spirit, as it grows, attains to greater heights and depths, and cannot be bound by its own formulae for all time, then there is real hope that we may cease to be as those children who were "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine," and become more and more simple and capable of union, like those other children who were suffered to come unto Jesus, since of such is the kingdom of Heaven.

THE TEACHING OF THE CREEDS.

By Alban G. Widgery, M.A. Camb., Professor of Moral Philosophy, Baroda.

The Bishop of Oxford in his Open Letter on "The Basis of Anglican Fellowship," charges Anglican Churchmen with a refusal to think clearly about principles. It is a challenge which we must take up. Not merely a few scholars, but religious Englishmen generally must be shown that clearness of thought in religious and moral questions is one of the main objects of the existence of the Churchmen's Union, and that its principles are worthy of, and, indeed, demand consideration and adoption for modern religious welfare.

(1) The principle of the free study of the Old and the New Testaments according to historical and scientific methods is now admitted by all who may reasonably claim to be considered. As the Creeds depend upon the Biblical records, they may be affected by their scientific study, but they must also undergo independent examination with relation to the religious life and modern knowledge. A step forward is made when we contemplate a free scientific, philosophical, and religious attitude towards the ancient statements of the beliefs of the Church. As ever before, there are still those who raise their voices in opposition as speaking with the authority of the Church of Christ.

(2) The question is a pertinent one whether one ought to teach Creeds at all. Before we can adjust ourselves to the physical and social world in which we live, we have to be deliberately taught many essential things which we could not come to know otherwise. Although we do not formally recite these articles of belief concerning the physical and social world, implicitly they guide our actions, and enable us to make advances into regions unknown to us before. Many such beliefs are, and must at first be, received on authority. Later, under the influence of science and reflection, some are modified and others discarded. The fact still remains that for a con-

sistent and rational attitude in life beliefs are necessary. The same applies even more strongly to ethical and religious Creeds. They form the backbone of religious experience, even though emotional and moral aspects constitute the more solid flesh.

(3) Religious creeds should sum up the beliefs concerning the fundamental character of existence. Our emotional and ethical attitude towards the ultimate nature of Reality is enormously influenced by them. They should give intellectual satisfaction, and a meaning to much that is otherwise obscure in the realm of the ethical. They should call forth emotions having a value of their own. They should express the principles implicated in the way or type of life of the religious body which accepts them. Like beliefs relating to the physical and social world, they have first to be taught on authority, but, like them, they should be modified in the light of advancing knowledge. With noble beliefs and high moral principles concerning life, men and women are able to overcome temptations to a lower type of conduct. The way to act and the kind of character we cultivate depend largely on what we believe. Thus religious creeds are desirable, even if not absolutely necessary.

(4) The next question is whether the traditional Creeds of Christendom give a valid view of the nature and meaning of existence, and are satisfactory as the expression of those religious beliefs which underlie our religious life. In this twentieth century we might have much better statements. The Christian view of life and the world should be taught—in a short summary if one will—in a way which appears to be most true, making as much use as possible of the traditional formulas. But, in the Ordination Service, the deacon promises "to instruct the youth in the Catechism," and in the Catechism is the Apostles' Creed. A deacon or priest convinced that the Creeds contain statements in conflict with the conclusions of scientific and ethical reflection, will at some point have to sacrifice obedience to the temporal power of an ecclesiastical superior for the sake of sincerity and truth. He may choose

to omit instruction in the Creeds. But, putting aside this cutting of the Gordian knot, how should the Creeds be taught by one who no longer adheres to them fully and unreservedly? This is the problem of The Teaching of the Creeds as many think of it at the present time.

(5) Before enquiring how the Creeds might be taught, we ought to consider to whom they should be taught. There is no conclusive reason why children should not learn by rote what they do not completely understand. Much may be made secondarily automatic in this way, and become useful at a later time. The Apostles' Creed lends itself to some simple exposition concerning God, the life of Jesus, the nature of the Church, the forgiveness of sins, and the belief in everlasting life. Such exposition—omitting all but what is fundamental and expressing everything as simply as possible—should be an element in the religious instruction of the young. It is unfortunate, but inevitable, that in this instruction they must be troubled with articles the consideration of which must be deferred. The time of preparation for confirmation is an important one for a thorough examination of the basal beliefs of the Christian life; and so for serious instruction in the Creeds; this only, if confirmation is not early, not until those to be confirmed have stability and some maturity of judgment. The period of adolescence has some great advantages, but also this paramount disadvantage: that the enthusiasm then awakened so often dies away in a very short time, and many look back and reflect, with astonishment, that confirmation should have seemed so much and now so little. Shorn of the emotional excitement and moral inspiration at that time so real, beliefs now appear unsatisfactory, and soon fail to influence life. At adolescence you may touch the feelings; it is later that you may make an appeal to calm reflection, which has an enduring effect in life.

How to attract and keep men to Men's Meetings and Bible Classes, is probably one of the most difficult problems of pastoral work. Not the least important factor is the choice of

subjects. There is a reluctance to propose and to embark upon the discussion of difficult theological topics; it is too often supposed that they will not attract. The fault has not seldom been that the subjects have not been treated with sufficient freedom; there has been a neglect of adequate preparation; open discussion has not been encouraged. Yet a Bible Class can, and ought to be, the most satisfactory opportunity for the consideration of the Creeds. If men are there for the sake of religion, they will be interested in earnest and intelligent enquiry into the elements of the faith. Here, indeed, is a call for us to make our principles clear.

The pulpit gives the widest scope for teaching within the Church, and it is essential that such teaching should be twofold—the simple homily and the elaboration and defence of fundamental principles and beliefs. In the beneficial reaction against the old dogmatic theological sermon, and in the present state of uncertainty in things theological, there is a marked tendency to limit far too much the consideration of the vital articles of faith. Here again is a call to make our principles clear.

(6) The temptation to adopt a form of symbolical interpretation, which it is supposed may give us an opportunity to retain all the articles in their present form of statement, is not difficult to understand. This was a leading method with most of the Catholic Modernists. The Encyclical of Pius X. against the Modernists seems to me to contain much that was more philosophically and theologically sound on this matter than the teaching of the Modernists themselves. The strength of the Modernist contention that the formulas of the Church have grown up in the life of the society and embody a wealth of religious experience cannot be denied; neither would it be wise to ignore the fact that much of our language is metaphorical and symbolic. But to the unsophisticated mind to appear to affirm and to deny the same proposition is, to say the least, confusing and not conducive to edification. Those who suggest the symbolical interpretation often suppose that

moral or religious truth is implied by all the articles of the Creeds. Yet it is not at all improbable that articles with no such value whatever have continued to live on just because of their repeated and continuous association with others which are fundamental. All too often the symbolical interpretation of the Creeds is a subterfuge to avoid stating clearly what one really means.

(7) The Creeds contain certain fundamentals of Christian Theism which, it must be assumed, everyone concerned with this paper will accept: "I believe in God the Father;" "in Jesus Christ;" "the Communion of Saints;" "the forgiveness of sins;" and "life everlasting." Instruction should be given in relation to these essentials, and should be almost entirely positive. An earnest and honest effort must be made to get the maximum of truth out of every theological idea or proposition, but it is also necessary to keep the articles of the Creeds in their proper perspective and to estimate rightly their relative values.

Some of these, in any case less important, articles appear to be the objects of legitimate doubt, such for example as "Born of the Virgin Mary;" "*only* Son;" "He descended into Hell" --of which, and their like, it may be said that they are unsupported by sufficient evidence; or, that they prevent a wider and more satisfactory view of life; or again, that they are of no religious significance. I am of confirmed opinion that even in the minds of many earnest Christians who seriously think they hold some of these beliefs, they are to all intents and purposes already dead. To discuss at length the dogma of the Virgin Birth, when there are so many urgent ethical and religious problems to settle, is a sheer, immoral waste of time.

If the doubtful propositions of the Creeds are to be discussed at all—as in some cases they must be—I would recommend that the *pros* and *cons* for the different positions, the traditional views and the modern liberal views, be put forward simply and frankly. Hearers must be left to be influenced by the inner logic of things themselves. They should feel compelled to

make a decision for themselves. The success of this method will depend on the earnestness of the teacher, and on the fairness with which he presents views differing from his own.

(8) It must be understood that the method proposed is only in recognition of the fact that at the present juncture it seems ecclesiastically impossible to formulate new Creeds or to obtain any modification of the traditional ones. We are forced to accommodate ourselves to the modes of expression, the misunderstandings, and the inaccuracies of vision of earlier ages. To meet this situation in part, another method of teaching the Creeds may be suggested. Start out with a consideration of the actual religious experiences of our own day, with the felt facts of the religious life as met in our own consciousness and in the literature that breathes religion rather than theology, and penetrate to the theological presuppositions, to the beliefs and principles which they embody. Ask what are the religious ideas which affect modern humanity. You will thus arrive at a formulation of your real religious creed, the ultimate grounds upon which your attitude towards life does, in truth, depend. Now compare this creed with the traditional Creeds. Possibly, even probably, there will be elements in the latter not to be found in the former. But it is not to be supposed that these may therefore be discarded. They may contain references to aspects of truth and life with which you have not yet become acquainted in your own experience. To find out if these additional elements are truths, they must now be carefully examined. The reason why they were ever included in the Christian confessions of faith must be enquired into. Such a method may make us a little less ready to discard elements of the Creeds, and a little more anxious that our religious experience shall be comprehensive. Such a method would also lead us to a more intimate examination of the actual religion of our own age.

(9) There still remains the question whether, though not absolutely *denying* any Article of the Creeds, a teacher,

ordained or lay, should openly declare his own disbelief. Shall we put our "nots" into the Creeds, as for example the Rev. J. M. Thompson urges in the August number of the *Modern Churchman?* A time will come when there must be an open policy of deliberately declaring that one does not accept certain beliefs as formulated in the Creeds. The important question is: Is that time yet? I do not think it is. It will come when there is an urgent call on theological as well as on political grounds for a reconstruction of the relations between Church and State. It will come when forces now working vaguely in the minds of laymen will lead to the demand for greater breadth and greater unity in religious organisations. The time is not yet. For individuals, or for groups of liberal thinkers to expose themselves by professions of disbelief, would be to deliver themselves to the "crowning mercies" of that clerical party which assumes to itself the right to speak with the voice of authority in the national Church. With the toil and turmoil of the war, the ordinary man who champions toleration, is far too much occupied to offer his opposition to the injustices certain dignitaries of the Anglican Church would willingly inflict upon liberal thinkers among its priests.

(10) If we are to be successful in our efforts for liberty and toleration, for breadth of view, and for scholarship, it will be only by retaining the good will and support of the rank and file of the religious community. I do not mean merely the members of the Anglican Communion. The Churchmen's Union should endeavour to co-operate with those large movements of men* in our country, who are striving in their own way to give expression to the religious life as they experience it, trying to hammer out a Creed which is living. The constitution of the National Church concerns the nation as a whole; and we must obtain the moral and actual support of these men in our demand for new statements of the theological and ecclesiastical position.

(11) If the members of the Churchmen's Union were to meet together in solemn conclave to discuss in detail every

* I refer more especially to the Adult School and Brotherhood movements.

article of the Creeds, views of very diverse kinds would probably manifest themselves. That is no reproach. We are not championing any particular interpretation of the Creeds, but the principle of liberty for the efforts of all to strive to find, and then to declare what they have reached as the deepest truth. Nevertheless, to minimise our agreements and to exaggerate our individual differences, is a great mistake. If we will avoid any unnecessary negation, it should be possible to find an interpretation of the Creeds at least generally acceptable to us. The time has come for a careful statement of the principles of the liberal position. We want something that could be put into the hands of those who are taught—a statement corresponding in some ways with, though shorter than, that used by many High Anglicans, under the title *The Catholic Religion: A Manual of Instruction for Members of the English Church*, by the Rev. Vernon Staley. One or more of the maturer and more learned members of the Churchmen's Union should draw up such a manual. It is a work for delicate hands and a calm, reverent mind. Calumny, persecution, and "polite" boycott are likely to be more keen in reference to a modern treatment of the Creeds and the nature of the National Church than they were with regard to a free scientific study of the Old and New Testaments. The task has, nevertheless, to be taken up, and I know of nothing that would aid those teaching the Creeds more than a manual of the kind suggested.

(12) The opportunity of the hour and of the age is with liberal Christians. Religious problems are a vivid reality. Men seek an intelligible and living creed. Through the war and the experiences connected with it, there is and there will be, much searching of heart and much questioning concerning the meaning of life and the world. Lifeless practices and obsolete dogmas, raised to the ranks of essentials, will prove more and more irritating. Whatever we do with regard to the traditional Creeds, let us formulate with all possible care, and teach with real conviction, the positive doctrines which satisfy human needs of this and of all time.

THE CHURCH AND NONCONFORMITY.

By the Rev. T. F. Royds, B.D., Vicar of Bollington, Altrincham.

When you try to draw "good Churchpeople" on Kikuyu problems, African or English, what usually happens? Their faces harden, they look as if you had introduced a *risqué* subject, they make a few cold remarks, and then lapse into silence, having silently wished you were a "better Churchman." And why not? Is not the Faith once delivered to the saints identical with that of the straitest sect of the Anglo-Catholics? To attend Mass in a Roman church is one thing. Rome is a titled lady of ancient lineage. If her character is doubtful, at least her blood is pure. One can dine with her, and talk about it afterwards. But hobnobbing with Dissenters is quite another thing. It is taking high tea with a respectable tradesman. We may dream of intimacy with him beyond the grave, where all our differences will somehow comfortably evaporate; but such people may be ignored in this world. It may be difficult to justify this attitude, but feminine logic is equal to the occasion:—"My dear, you know, we really *can't;* they're *impossible.*"

And this brings me to the point that the barrier between the Church and Nonconformity is largely a social one. Similarly, the roots of the divisions of Methodism, says Dr. H. B. Workman, "lie rather in personal considerations than in fundamental differences of doctrine or government." (*Methodism*, p. 89). I once heard a very eminent Congregationalist divine tell his audience that one of their greatest enemies was "the spirit of Eton." Now I am not an Etonian, but the words rankled and left me thinking. The Church is, or was, popularly supposed to be Tory and aristocratic, the chapel is the refuge of the Liberal democracy. Certain it is that the highest stratum of English society is predominately "Church," and that the

chapels draw their congregations mainly from the middle and lower strata. The causes of this fact lie in the past; it is now a matter of heredity. Hence it is as vain and vulgar to call the average Nonconformist a schismatic as it is to blame any man for his ancestry. His parents, and not he, are responsible for his existence, and often his teeth are set on edge by the sour grapes that they were fed on before his birth. The bitterness of the attack on the Church in Wales gives us a good instance of this.

But what is schism? What St. Paul deplored at Corinth was not, surely, an attempt to found a rival Church, but party-spirit within the Church. A modern Nonconformist writer, C. F. Hunter (*What a Christian believes*, p. 232), suggests that the best cure for this is peaceful separation. He compares it to the setting up of a separate home by a son or a daughter. These are his words:—

> "In so far as the Nonconformist Churches bear good-will to the Established Church, there is no schism in their separation from it. Schism might, and probably would, have arisen if they had remained within the Church discontented, and at variance with it."

On the other hand Archdeacon Greig, in his book, *The Church and Nonconformity*, speaks of disunion as "a serious disease." According to him it "springs from sin," and "has the nature of sin." I venture to think that Mr. Hunter's view is nearer the truth. The dissidence of Dissent, the fissiparousness of Protestantism, are notorious; but they are a mark of life rather than of death. From one point of view we may fairly compare the revolt of the Free Churches to the birth of a child; or again (I speak as a bee-keeper), to a strong hive founding a new colony by throwing off a swarm. A new body, a new organism, is created. It means independence, freedom, and progress. We must not expect the Nonconformist Nicodemus to enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born. What he needs, and what we need, is a spiritual re-birth. I believe it is an entire mistake to work for re-absorption. If it ever comes, it will not come through insisting on episcopacy as essential to a true Church, or through

bolstering up the Tractarian doctrine of Apostolical succession. The theological foundations of the Oxford Movement have been broken up. What is wanted is a new Oxford Movement, based on a twentieth century study of the New Testament and Church History. I should prefer, as the son of an old Rugbeian, to call it a Rugby Movement, and dedicate it to the revered memory of the great Dr. Arnold. I would say of it what Canon Tupper Carey says about foreign mission work:—"The whole Church must turn round in this matter."

How shall we begin? Personally I would go slowly, and do a great deal of talking first. "Nothing is more amazing," says Archdeacon Greig, "than the extent and depth of mutual ignorance which prevails in England on the part of Churchmen and Nonconformists." (*op. cit.*, p. 184). The first need is better mutual understanding. Thus alone can we pave the way for the exchange of pulpits that some of us hope for at home as well as in the Mission field. In Manchester we have a "Ministers' Fraternal Society," in which all denominations, even Unitarians, meet for the discussion of subjects of common interest. Controversial subjects are not excluded, and I believe our meetings do nothing but good. Surely there ought to be a society of this kind in every large town. If Roman Catholics could be induced to come, so much the better. There will be a great clearing away of cobwebs, a great removing of the things that are shaken. It will then appear to all that, if I may adapt a saying of Principal Rainy's, "There is more in Jesus Christ to make us one than in anything else whatever to divide us." And if, after this, there must be fighting, it will not be done in the dark, as is too often the case at present, ἐν δὲ φάει καὶ ὅλεσσον. In this connection I would, parenthetically, plead for more controversial discussion at clerical society meetings. High, Low, and Broad Churchmen must criticise one another *in camera*. There would then be less controversy at public meetings, in the press, and, worst of all, in the pulpit. At present good men often avoid controversy through fear of hurting one another's feelings; in fact through lack of faith in

each other's charity; and neither side knows its own weakness and the strength of its oponents. πόλεμος πατὴρ πάντων, says Heraclitus. Out of strife comes life, out of argument truth.

When the way has been properly paved by mutual understanding of differences, I cannot see that exchange of pulpits will be any more dangerous between Churchmen and Nonconformists than it is at present between men of pronounced High or Low views within the Church. There is nothing against it in principle, so the Primate tells us, and it becomes a matter of policy, to be handled with sanctified commonsense. It is sad that the pulpits of S. Paul's and Westminster Abbey should remain closed to some of the greatest preachers that England and Scotland can produce; but I fear the time is not ripe for any general exchange. Let me give an illustration from real life. Some years ago there was a Congregational Summer School of Missions in the town in which I was then a curate. Dr. Adeney and Dr. Horton gave some expository lectures on the Bible, and I remember thinking at the time that I had never heard anything of the kind quite so well done. I looked round me for members of my own congregation, and sighted one solitary tradesman, who was already half a Nonconformist. Now if either of these eminent divines had preached in the parish church, I am very much afraid that many of the congregation would have refused to come and hear him. It was bad enough to have the Lessons read by Baptists, Lady Huntingdons, infidels, and heretics, on the Coronation Day. Even the verger said the church wanted an extra cleaning after that service.

Now let me show you another scene: the opening of a new Congregational church. The clergy of the neighbourhood were invited, and I went. J. D. Jones, of Bournemouth, was in the pulpit, seated there, and surveying us as we went in. The sermon struck me as admirable, both in matter and manner. As before, I looked round me for confederates, and this time I found two, both members of the Churchmen's Union. I boasted freely of my exploit afterwards, and watched

the effect. One friend was inclined to condone the offence, but admitted that he would not have done it himself. Another asked me if I had made any preliminary enquiries about the doctrine to be taught from that pulpit. A third improved the occasion by saying that all Dissenters ought to be burnt. He was a layman. *Corruptio optimi.*

The Lambeth Conference of 1908 passed these two resolutions:—

> "Every opportunity should be welcomed of co-operation between members of different communions, in all matters pertaining to the social and moral welfare of the people.
>
> "The members of the Anglican Communion should take pains to study the doctrines and positions of those who are separated from it, and to promote a cordial mutual understanding, and, as a means towards this end, the Conference suggests that private meetings of ministers and laymen of different Christian bodies for common study, discussion, and prayer should be frequently held in convenient centres."

You will notice, in passing, the avoidance of the word "Church." We have travelled a long way from the day when Bishop Christopher Wordsworth objected to the title "Reverend" on a Dissenting minister's tombstone; but so long as we refuse the claim of Wesleyans and others to be regarded as a branch of the Catholic Church, our acts of courtesy, so a Wesleyan writer has just informed us, "will be largely discounted." The name, "Free Churchmen," is harmless enough; but what will happen to it if the Established Church is ever disestablished, and we are all Free Churchmen together, I do not know. It might mean the breaking down of another barrier. Be that as it may, I am sure we shall agree that the advice of the Lambeth Conference is excellent, as far as it goes, and the best way to ward off Disestablishment. But ought we to fraternise everywhere except in church? Can we not make "the social and moral welfare of the people" a matter for common prayer and praise?

There is a certain type of "good Churchman" who prides himself on his friendly relations with Dissenters. What it means is that he is honest, plain-spoken, and sociable. He tells them what he thinks and says he means to stick to it, and

hopes they will stick to their principles too. Then he shakes hands and drinks tea with them, and they are all jolly good fellows together on neutral ground, namely somebody else's drawing room. This is what English and German soldiers did on Christmas Day. They exchanged cigarettes and wanted to play football, and then went back to their fighting. It was beautiful as far as it went, but it was not co-operation, still less was it re-union. The Nonconformists may go home and say to their wives:—"The Zanzibarbarous people showed us no little kindness." But it does not follow that the aforesaid people were Christians. I have heard of an excellent man who will go as far as the door of a Dissenting bazaar, and shake hands with the people as they pass in and out. "They quite understand my position," he says. No doubt they do; and perhaps some of them even understand the position of those Jews, who "went not into the judgment hall lest they should be defiled."

What impression does this kind of thing make on the Nonconformist critic? Well, these are the views of the late Mr. Brierley, whom Archdeacon Greig describes as an "high-minded man, incapable of spiteful and malicious writing." He is addressing a modern Anglican clergyman:—

> "What in heaven's name do you propose to convert these people to? Is it modern Anglicanism? That institution has undoubtedly some Christian doctrine inside it. But what of its environment? What social instincts of the working man does its system appeal to? Its religious services are conducted by a white-robed gentleman, who reads or intones a ritual which might as well be addressed to the moon as to our artisan. This goes on in a cold building, whose occupants are well-dressed people who would be insulted if he sat by their side. Genial atmosphere this for the expansion of his social instincts! When in addition our proletaire learns that the institution which, as a convert, he is invited to join, is the trenched and moated city of the aristocratic, feudal principle; that in its government its people have no vote; that its interests are above all things the interests of property, of class-distinction, of social exclusiveness—of all, in short, that militates most fiercely against his individual and class aspirations, can we be serious in proposing that he should join it? His conversion to all this would indeed be the most astounding of all miracles. But do not, in the name of common sense, let us speak of this attitude as the rejection of Christianity. It is a rejection of feudalism and the cold shoulder."

I wish Mr. Brierley had not drawn so grossly misleading a picture. But there is just enough truth in it to make some of us feel uncomfortable. Is it all our fault? I think not. We cannot eradicate class distinctions; they lie too deep for that, and they are not all artificial, but bound up with character, taste, and the whole mental furniture of a man. At the same time we can, to a great extent, ignore them in practice, and I do not find that Mr. Brierley and his friends help us to do this, though it is one of the chief aims of Christianity. An Anglican might reply to him that too many chapels reek of class-hatred, politics, and anti-patriotism; and that this is the cause of the aloofness of the Church. The chapel must stick to preaching the Gospel; it must give up inviting members of Parliament to make electioneering speeches from its pulpits; it must clear itself from the charge of being the greatest enemy of the recruiting sergeant (I am speaking here of a time before the war); it must be content to preach Christ, and Him crucified. It must declare the whole counsel of God, including the all-pervading graces of Charity and Humility.

The Church has no wish to copy the methods of the Men's Brotherhood or Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, if one at which I was present a few years ago is a fair specimen. It was an immense gathering of men somewhere in East London. There was a speech by a doctor, who had been travelling abroad, and there was a lady soloist, and plenty of laughter, applause, cracking of nuts, and sucking of sweets. But the spirit of worship seemed conspicuous by its absence, and I need hardly say there was no kneeling. The well-dressed Anglican, however "bad" a Churchman, will not go to such a meeting. Its vulgarity puts him off; he "*must* draw the line *there*."

I turn now to a pleasanter aspect of the subject. The war has already obliterated many old landmarks. In a certain Lancashire town, so I hear, an open-air service is held every night, and it is conducted in turn by the incumbent of the parish, a Wesleyan minister, and a Salvation Army leader. In a small village that I know, a combined service was held on

Sunday afternoon, August the 8th, by the Vicar and the Wesleyan minister. The latter read a Lesson, and also said an extempore prayer. This proceeding was, I suppose, "irregular." But the prayer was a model of what such a prayer should be, and all were helped and edified, including the Vicar. Cannot something of this kind be made a step to the exchange of pulpits? All kinds of dangerous matter might conceivably be introduced into a prayer. But will any respectable minister take advantage of the opportunity? Will he not take particular care to avoid giving offence, that his ministry be not blamed? And that he may look forward to being asked to come again? The case of the pulpit is different. The minister is there as a teacher. Mr. Pullan, in his latest pronouncement, ridicules the thought of a Christian prophet coming to St. Peter or St. Paul and saying "I dislike your Sacramentalism, and I have no intention of placing myself under your instruction, and I have built a church in which to preach my own opinions, but I respect your goodness, and am ready to accept an invitation to address your converts." What would Mr. Pullan say if a Low Churchman went to him and said, "I abhor your views, I will not wear your vestments, I will not smell incense in your solemn assemblies; but I shall be delighted to preach at your Harvest Festival next Sunday, if you will kindly do the same for me?" Would Mr. Pullan accept the offer? If not, why not? As things are, the pulpits of many parish churches are closed to all except men of a particular point of view. The first thing needed, then, is a general circulation of preachers within the Established Church. It is plainly undesirable that men of opposite schools of thought should use the same pulpit to expound them, perhaps with more zeal than charity. But in practice this seldom happens. And I think the reason is plain. It is because men of honour trust one another to keep to that neutral ground which is so infinitely greater in extent than that which is in dispute. Let any average preacher consult his sermons for an average year, and ask himself how many of them are "denominational" in character. It may come as a

shock and a surprise to him, especially if he be a strong High Churchman, to find what a large proportion of them might have been preached anywhere. But he ought to welcome this as fresh evidence of the truth of St. Paul's words—"There is one body and one Spirit, . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." And he may comfort himself with the thought that he has unconsciously been "giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. iv., 1-6).

The words of the hymn, "One in faith and doctrine," may be a bitter mockery, but the "one faith" in the Pauline sense is a reality. "The faith once delivered to the saints"[1] . . . . is "not those words of the Fathers, nor any words at all; it is a thing; . . . . Communion . . . . Life in Christ. That is what was handed down to us and we must hand on to others. That, not words which the Council's clerk wrote out on a parchment and 300 bishops signed." As the context in the Epistle of St. Jude shews, faith is here used in a *moral* sense. Those who reject it are called in the next verse not unbelievers, but "ungodly men . . . . who make the mercy of God an excuse for profligacy, and disown our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." To keep the faith is to keep the way and the life as well as the truth; and it is not wise to treat the passage as a prophetic reference to the Athanasian Creed. The Faith once delivered to the Saints is really a kind of undenominationalism. But it is not a "residuum," or a "moral monster," or "the common enemy of us all." Those who represent undenominationalism as a new creed, which denies the truth of all the other creeds and the need for any Church at all, can easily make it look absurd. I prefer to avoid the word, or at least the termination "ism." "Non-denominationalism" is better, but perhaps "the non-denominational basis of faith" is better still. It is another name for fundamental Christianity, or what most Churches hold in common.

[1] Dr. Skrine, *Pastor Futurus*, p. 285.

I have never heard the charge of undenominationalism preferred against John Bunyan, or Richard Baxter, or William Law, or Thomas à Kempis, or John Henry Newman, or George Tyrrell. Yet the best writings of these men are the common property of us all. Let anyone who keeps a shelf of famous preachers take down a few volumes and see how much "definite Church teaching" he can extract from their pages. He will probably find he has been following the best models in preaching a great deal of "mere morality," and in rating Christian character higher than adhesion to any particular Christian society. If he will consider the remarkable number of hymns which we share with other Churches, for instance with the Wesleyans, the same thing will strike him. He will not regard contact with Nonconformity as one of the defilements to be contracted by a good Churchman in the midst of this miserable and naughty world; he will rather echo the admirable words of the *Guardian* on August 5th:—

> "We would add with all necessary emphasis, that in this connection we are urging no campaign of proselytism on behalf of the Church in this country as differentiated from other Christian Communions. . . . . The aim to be kept in view should be that of bringing men to Christ, to belief in a personal Saviour, rather than to special acceptance of the distinguishing tenets of Anglicanism."

Whatever we do, we must not consciously proselytise. When men begin to be zealous not for the Kingdom of God, but for the success of their own denomination, when they begin to think that the world was made for their Church, and not their Church for the world, then the fatal blindness of "crowd-morality" overtakes them, and they sink to a kind of class-selfishness, fighting for their rights like men on strike, and sheltering themselves under the public opinion of their sect.

I do not know if those who are to speak to-morrow will consider the possibility of a theological college for more than one denomination. The practical difficulties in the way seem to me to be very great. But Canon Watson has reminded us recently that something of the kind was attempted in the eighteenth century:—

> "Independent ministers served as what we call lay readers, and churchmen supported an Independent college for training such men; on neither side was there any thought of incongruity. . . . . The Countess of Huntingdon, Whitefield's chief supporter, founded her own college at Trevecca for the cheap education of ministers either for church or chapel."[1]

A word about school-teaching, and I have done. I fear my experience is not worth very much, for in ten years of public school, town school, and village school teaching, I have never met a single case of "grievance" on the part of parents. Their grievances are, I believe, mostly manufactured for them from above by people who do not put the welfare of the children first. The main question is not "What are the rights of my denomination?" but "What is the best for the children of the nation?" Then we have to consider what can actually be done by the average teacher? We must not forget the village schoolmistress of twenty years standing. I am not going to attempt any suggestions for a new Education Bill to-day; I will only insist once more on the immense amount of non-denominational matter in the Bible. The fact that full-grown Christians mostly feed on denominational products, must not blind us to the nutritive value of the original milk of the Word. The Prayer-book as a whole is obviously not common ground, but the Gospels are neither Catholic or Protestant: they are the product of early Jewish Christianity, and the common property of Christians in all ages. We study them in the glorious company of the greatest commentators, from the inimitable Matthew Henry and Bengel to the latest *International Critical* volume. We are cosmopolitan in the study, must we be insular in the school and the pulpit? It is, broadly speaking, only when we come to the Sacraments that we are compelled to take a definite line in opposition to some other Church. And it is a great deal better to teach the Bible without the Prayer-book than not to teach it at all. The secular solution must be avoided at all costs. It will indeed be a shameful thing if the Church ever says to the world:—

[1] *The Church of England*, Home University Library, p. 199.

"There is so much schism amongst English Christians that we have had to compose our quarrels by ignoring the Bible altogether in our state system of education."

My own belief is that the only way to attack the cause of our disputes is by united study and prayer, and by pastoral sympathy. By pastoral sympathy I mean the recognition by every parish priest of a certain responsibility for the souls of all in his parish. He will visit wherever he is welcome; he will choose his parish magazine with care, and offer it to all without distinction; he will refuse to narrow an inter-denominational society, such as the Mothers' Union, into a Communicants' Guild, a thing which he has no right to do; and when he is in the pulpit he will remember that among his hearers there may easily be one whose brother-in-law or sister-in-law is a Nonconformist, and he will consider how his words will sound in the ears of such an one. *Solvitur ambulando.* If the right temper is there, we can commit the issue to God, trusting that the right result will some day follow. We shall, as far as in us lies, do nothing to increase the burden of the Bishops, or the bitterness of our opponents. The war is giving us an opportunity that will not return. If it is to mean a new Coming of Christ, and not a relapse into paganism, we must "seriously lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions," and pray, in the words of the same noble Prayer,[1] for the taking away of "all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly Union and Concord."

Some Modern Literature suggested for study:—

The Church and Nonconformity.—Archdeacon Greig.
Methodism.—Dr. H. B. Workman.
What a Christian believes, and why?—C. F. Hunter.
Kikuyu.—The Archbishop of Canterbury.
Missionary Principles, and the Primate on Kikuyu.—The Rev. Leighton Pullan.
Anglicanism Past and Present.—"Dublin Review," July, 1915. (Dealing with the Romeward movement).
The S.P.G.: Its aims and ideals.—Bp. Montgomery.
The East and the West (July).—Dr. A. W. Robinson, on *The Kikuyu Decision.*
Shall we behave as Christians?—The Rev. Percy Dearmer.

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[1] King's Accession Service.

TOWARDS UNITY.

By the Rev. J. M. Jeakes, M.A., sometime Vicar of Grayshott.

I.

The present divisions among English Christians are due to causes which have, for the most part, passed away.

Once each body of Christians defended its own particular system on the ground that it alone had the sanction of the New Testament.

But now, people are Anglican or Nonconformist, not as a rule because of some abstract theory of Church government, but because their fathers were such before them.

Preachers and teachers who best serve the present time are more conscious of the underlying convictions by which all Christians live than of the divisions which still separate them.

This is a notable change, and its cause is not far to seek.

It is due to the closer study of the New Testament, and of the records of the early Church, which has been the work of the years immediately behind us.

Scholars whose one aim has been to know the truth have made us see that our Lord gave to His Church no one particular form which should endure unchanged to the end. He sowed a seed and left the rest to God.

That seed has taken root and sprung up, and multiplied according to the law of its indwelling life. Its form has been determined by the different soils in which it has grown, and has adapted itself to changing conditions.

So the *static* conception of the Church has given way to the *dynamic* conception of the Church, and this change has taken the meaning out of many long and bitter controversies.

The various *parts of the Church of Christ* (I gladly borrow this phrase from the Archbishop's *Kikuyu* statement)[1] are all

[1] *Kikuyu*, p. 30.

of them developments from one seed; and we cannot say of any one of them that it is the only legitimate development.

We claim for our episcopal form of government a high antiquity and a continuous use. We have in it, I believe, a safeguard against some real dangers, to which a purely congregational system must always be exposed.

But that is very far from condemning the ministry of the non-episcopal bodies as an "*invalid*" ministry; and it is a good sign for the future that the latest heirs of the Oxford Movement, in so far as they are represented by Mr. Rawlinson in his essay in *Foundations*,[1] are "abandoning epithets like *valid* and *invalid* as the *damnosa hereditas* of an age of legal metaphors and embittered controversy."

It is also to be noted that the Archbishop in his *Kikuyu*[2] statement deliberately avoids these words *valid* and *invalid*, "as," he says, "I have always felt unable, without a feeling of intolerable presumption, to give to that phrase the meaning which in popular parlance it would seem to carry."

This goes a long way towards the assertion of the principle for which (as I think) truth compels us to contend. That principle is that unity of organization is by no means necessary to the fulfilment of the Lord's prayer for His people, "that they all might be one." In the "one flock" of the "one shepherd," there is room—if the will of God be so—for many "folds." Our immediate aim is *not unity of form but unity of spirit.*

II.

How, then, shall we work out this principle in our preaching and teaching?

(1) I think that, even among our more liberal congregations, there is need for plain teaching about the grounds upon which we believe that we can defend our own form of Church order without violence to historic truth.

Liberal congregations are still comparatively few, and many of their members come to them with ideas learnt in a different

[1] *Foundations*, p. 386. [2] *Kikuyu*, p. 30, note.

school. The "old wineskins" of sectarianism are ill fitted to hold the "new wine" which more liberal teachers would put into them. The "new wine" if it is to be preserved, needs to be put into "new wineskins."

If, then, we are to be consistent in our teaching, and true to the knowledge which God has given us through great teachers of our own Church—men like Lightfoot and Hort and Hatch—we must do what in us lies to make this knowledge "current coin" among our people. We shall claim for our own Church order that the blessing of God has been, and is, upon it. We shall hold to it as our best hope of ordered liberty for the future. But we shall also teach our people to recognise in other Christian communities "other parts of the Church of Christ." We shall preach Christ as the one foundation of our Christian fellowship.

(2) Again, if we believe that our fellow-teachers who have not been episcopally ordained "have received the Holy Ghost as well as we" for the work of the ministry, then it seems to be a matter of principle that we should claim for the recognised ministers of other parts of the Church of Christ the right, upon proper invitation, to address our congregations; and that we should be free, under like conditions, to address theirs.

Bishop Creighton, in his quaint way, wrote to a correspondent who had consulted him on this matter.

> "It is as if we proposed to be 'At Home' in one another's houses as a sign of neighbourly feeling!"[1]

This sentence, like so many of his, sticks to the memory. It hardly amounts to serious argument; but it does suggest that such interchanges, so long as they were exceptional, might have too much of the nature of "demonstrations" to be altogether edifying. But such a difficulty would only be temporary, and we should soon come to regard the visits of good and able teachers of other communions as a normal as well as a helpful element in our Church life.

Authorities move slowly; but meanwhile the Christian people of England can, if they will, take the matter into their own

[1] *Life and Letters*, II., 282.

hands. I think that only good would come of a more frequent attendance of members of Nonconformist congregations at our Church Services and of our people at theirs; for each has something to give that the other lacks.

Only, I would suggest that we sometimes put unnecessary difficulties in the way of members of other communions who, from time to time, worship with us.

We teach by our forms of worship as well as by our sermons; and those Anglican Churchmen who accept the broad conclusion of Bishop Lightfoot's famous essay on the Christian ministry—"*The Kingdom of Christ has no sacerdotal system*"[1]—have no use, it seems to me, for the kind of vestment or ritual which, to most English people at least, suggests the belief that the highest gifts of God are mediated only through an episcopally ordained priesthood.

I think that liberal Churchmen should stand for a certain simplicity of worship. Our worship need lack neither beauty nor dignity nor reverence. But it should be, so far as possible, in harmony with the teaching of our pulpits.

(3) Then, in our public utterances as well as in the ordinary routine of parish life, we need to observe what a Nonconformist neighbour of mine used to call "a certain inter-denominational courtesy."

I should not venture to say anything so entirely obvious to members of a Society which has for one of its objects "to encourage friendly relations between the Church of England and all other Christian bodies," except for the fact that there seems to be no necessary connection between liberal theology and interdenominational courtesy.

In a sermon lately preached to this Union, the Dean of Durham spoke of the Nonconformist advocates of Disestablishment and Disendowment in Wales as "those slaves of sectarian rancour and political prejudice" and of "the squalid ardour of their political action."[2]

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[1] *Epistle to Philippians*, p. 179.

[2] *Modern Churchman*, June, 1915, p. 158.

Now I find myself quite out of sympathy with the "political Nonconformist." I believe that our union with the civil power has been in the past the charter of our freedom. I do not think that "liberty of prophesying" will ever be safe in the hands of a clerical oligarchy. I see, therefore, nothing to hope for in disestablishment or disendowment. But I do not find in the Dean's language a true portrait of any Nonconformist whom I have known. It seems to me to be as deficient in truth as in courtesy. When "burning questions" arise, let us—on both sides—bind ourselves by the famous clause of Penn's treaty with the Indians—"not to believe evil reports one of another."

(4) And *all* Christian teachers have to realise that the anti-Christian forces of the present time are attacking, not this or that outwork of our faith, but the ground upon which all Christians stand.

A generation or two ago, it was assumed (at least in England) that all men of good sense and good will were agreed upon a moral ideal of life which might broadly be called Christian.

But much has happened since John Stuart Mill wrote that it would not be easy "even for unbelievers, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life."[1]

Nietzsche, for example, directed his attack at the Christian *morality*, and Europe is now learning, through a terrible experience, the practical meaning of this doctrine of the "will to power."

And the same kind of doctrine, diluted for English consumption by some of our popular writers, is opposing to the Christian morality a morality which is frankly anti-Christian.

So we are face to face with the fact (and it is one of the plainest lessons of a terrible year) that, if the Christian faith is repudiated, the Christian law of conduct, which we had almost come to regard as the common property of our civilization, will not long survive it.

[1] *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 255.

This is the common concern of *all* Christian teachers. It is a call to us, and a call from God, to be of one heart, and—so far as that is possible—of one mind, in face of the common enemy. We need to pray together, and to take counsel together, that the whole Church may put forth its whole strength.

III.

Our immediate aim, I repeat, is not unity of form, but unity of spirit. But I think that Christian teachers must be prepared, and must prepare their people, to go further than that, if and when God wills it.

The world is changing quickly, and in the years before us it may change more quickly still.

Even now, as Kikuyu has reminded us, our sectarianism presents a real difficulty to the *Mission work* of the Christian Church. There is, as the Archbishop has said, "the extreme danger of needlessly stereotyping in infant Christian communities the existing British lines of denominational division."[1]

And then, again, when the manhood of England returns from the war, it will bring back with it (we may well believe) a deep sense of the realities of faith, but very little concern (we may safely predict) in our ecclesiastical controversies.

In that day, it is not too much to hope that the whole nation —knowing at last what civilization apart from faith means—will be ready to take the Christian faith more seriously than it has ever taken it yet.

Then a Christian Church which shall unite all the Christian forces of the nation will be among the possibilities of the future. For the divisions of Churches are not necessarily more lasting than the divisions of nations. A divided Italy, at the call of a prophet who knew the signs of the times, became one nation. Why may not a divided England become at last one Church? Only we must remember that such a living Nation-Church cannot be made by the wit of man. It must grow out of present conditions, according to the will of God.

[1] *Kikuyu*, p. 11.

The German State, more than half-a-century ago, created for its own purposes a State Church: and I am told on good authority that that artificial structure involved the loss of much that was most vital in the institutions out of which it was formed.

The Russian Church, on the other hand—"the greatest national Church now existing in the world"[1] Stanley called it—has grown *with* the nation. It may still be superstitious and intolerant, as all Churches have been. But it is not a "sterile" Church. Its fruit is a Christian nation.

So it may be that, in God's providence, the English nation will at last become one Church. But much must happen first: and the Christian teachers of this generation can do no more than prepare the way towards an end which is still out of sight.

We cannot, indeed, hope for any closer fellowship with the Roman communion, so long as that body maintains its exclusive claim to be the one Catholic Church; and it is possible that a closer fellowship between ourselves and our non-episcopal brethren might drive some of our fellow Anglicans, who now feel it to be their duty to "unchurch" them, to find an escape from their present isolation through submission to the Roman obedience.

That is not a result which we should desire; but our business is not with results, but with principles.

If the principle for which we stand is true, then no power on earth can resist it. In the end it must prevail; for *the Spirit of truth is come to lead us into all truth.*

[1] *Eastern Church*, p. 413.

JOINT COMMUNION.

By the Rev. Canon BANNISTER, M.A., Hereford.

In a conference of Modern Churchmen to elaborate the abstract arguments in favour of inter-communion, and to marshal historical instances, would be waste of time. I assume that you all, held back by no theories of exclusion, are eager to take any steps towards Christian unity and fellowship which are expedient and practicable. My task, then, is to show, if it may be, that to establish the custom of inter-communion is, under existing conditions, the most practical step towards religious unity in the nation.

From the distant seventeenth century day when Archbishop Sancroft first asked Dissenters to join with him "in prayer for an universal blessed union of all reformed Churches at home and abroad," Christian men have hoped and longed for Christian unity. But we have listened far too readily to those who counsel us to caution—to the exercise of "patience, and prayer, and study." Speaking broadly, we have, in all these centuries, given little really practical effect to our desire for godly union and concord. Yet it can never be more than a pious aspiration without some individual initiative. It is a self-evident truth that no advance will ever be made until somebody makes it—somebody who places the making of that particular advance above all his other interests. Now it is the business of the Churchmen's Union, I take it, not anxiously to follow precedents, but, if need be, to create them. We have wisely made it one of our "objects," not to work for any corporate re-union or formal federation, but "to encourage friendly relations between the Church of England and all other Christian bodies." I would urge, then, that we can only begin to do this, by getting, as individual Christian men, into definite friendly relations with other Christian men.

But here, at once, we have to make up our minds, with what Christian men it is presently practicable to get into genuinely friendly relations—those, say, of Rome and Russia, or those of

Great Britain. It is certain that, for some generations at any rate, we cannot enter into closer relations with both. The *via media* theory of the English Church has completely broken down. It is the cross-roads we have come to, and we must make our choice. One party in the church has bravely made its choice, has turned its back upon our Nonconformist neighbours in a futile endeavour to effect a union with Rome. Even they are beginning to recognise that re-union with Rome can only mean submission to Rome. Historically, theologically, and from the point of view of our immediate circumstances and associations, our friendliest relations must be with our natural allies, our Nonconformist fellow-Christians and fellow-citizens at home.

But, in the next place, what do we mean by "friendly relations"? To the Christian, surely, the words imply, first and foremost, praying together. Let us once begin, as individual men and women, to pray together, and many other things will follow of themselves. And the highest act of common prayer is to kneel together at that Table of the Lord, where there is no distinction of Jew or Greek, of bond or free. Until we acquire this habit of joint communion—Christian meeting Christian on equal terms at that holy Table—all talk of Christian unity is beside the mark.

It is useless, when we have come to the parting of the ways, to stand still, pondering the preliminary questions which we have discussed with no result, for centuries, The moment has come to decide, if our choice is not to go by for ever. The occasion demands action, and, for some time, it must be the action of individuals. For the problem, in its present stage, is not one of union or re-union between Church and Church, or sect and sect, but of neighbourly Christian fellowship between man and man—the kindred households of the faith retaining their own domestic arrangements with regard to doctrine, dress, and ceremonial, but the individual members of one household paying frequent friendly visits to their neighbours of another, thus frankly recognizing a diversity of mind in theology, while practically exhibiting a unity of heart in religion.

Let me tell you briefly how we started to do this at Hereford. From the Bishop downwards, all of us, save a few of the clergy, increasingly felt, with regard to the twenty-one Lambeth Resolutions on "Re-union and Inter-communion," that such admirable sentiments, from so authoritative a source, must of necessity remain a dead letter, if we simply treated them as pious opinions, and took no steps to give them practical effect. We therefore began to move at once, though tentatively at first. The very year of the Lambeth Conference (1908), as it happened, was the tercentenary of the birth of one of the greatest of Nonconformists, John Milton. So we held in the cathedral a great united service, at which a leading Congregationalist. Dr. Horton, read the special lesson, and I had the honour of preaching. A few months later we established in Hereford a "Christian Ministers' Club," consisting of two canons of the cathedral, about ten of the local parish clergy, and the same number of Nonconformist ministers. This gave us opportunities for common prayer, study of the scriptures, and discussion of subjects of mutual interest.

Largely as a result of this drawing together, I was invited in 1910 to preach at the Wesleyan Harvest Festival, and there I said, with the Bishop's full consent and approval, that we ought never to rest content until we had learned to join one another in the highest act of prayer, until we had established the custom of inter-communion, of uniting from time to time with those of another household in the Supper of the Lord. A few weeks later, at the Diocesan Conference, the Bishop spoke at length on the subject of such re-unions. You will easily see, then, that our joint communion was not, as the Bishop of Winchester complained, a bolt from the blue, specially calculated to excite in men's minds "feelings of very considerable alarm." It had been talked of, expected, and longed for, by many Churchmen and Nonconformists months before. Like dozens of similar acts of friendly Christian brotherhood, it would have attracted little or no attention outside the Diocese, but for the deliberate advertisement given to it in the Upper House of Convocation by the Bishop of Winchester. So was

it with the communion at Kikuyu. That would have been scarcely heard of in England, had not the Bishop of Zanzibar compelled English Churchmen once for all to face the question whether they really desire religious fellowship among English-speaking Christians or not. So it is that, by the action of these Bishops, inter-communion must now become a test question, a sort of winnowing-fan. Mr. Leighton Pullan is quite justified in asserting that it is not a mere question of discipline and administration. "There are at stake," he truly says, "two fundamentally different conceptions of the work of Jesus Christ." It is a clear issue, which has already advertised to the world the sharp antagonism between the lay and the clerical mind, setting the considered and sober approval of the *Times*, the *Spectator*, and other like organs of public opinion, over against the threats of certain clergy to secede, if we do not accept their ruling as to what is (again in Mr. Pullan's words), "the plain, indisputable teaching and discipline of the whole Catholic Church."

If we refuse, as I take it we shall refuse, to receive submissively "the indisputable teaching and discipline of the whole Catholic Church," what is there else that should prevent Modern Churchman and Evangelicals—that is, the vast majority of the members of our Church—from endeavouring to make joint communion a common practice? Individual instances of occasional conformity are, of course, not infrequent. The *Spectator* refers to the Prince Consort, Queen Alexandra, and other royal princes and princesses, as receiving the communion in our Church unrebuked, though without episcopal confirmation. And among the 2000 or more letters of congratulation we received at Hereford was one from a colonel in the army, who wrote:—"As a soldier for 41 years, I have the happiest recollections of united communions in India, under the auspices of the Church of England, and of similar ones under the auspices of Nonconformists, at which a good number of Church of England laity were present." Away at the front also, to-day, a fine feeling of brotherliness is showing itself among the chaplains, who are looking at the Christian religion in a larger perspective, and a broader view than they

had seen at home. And so they do not cavil and question when a Methodist, a Baptist, or an unbaptized Salvationist, presents himself at the Table of the Lord, as, in the urgency of their soul's need, we are told they often do out there. There are surely few indeed who would excommunicate those whose only fault is Nonconformity at the very time when they are conforming.

So we may take it that occasional conformity as regards individuals—that "healing custom," as Richard Baxter called it—is, in practice, encouraged or condoned by almost everyone. But what of such purposely planned joint communions as those of Dean Stanley in 1870, of our Bishop at Hereford in 1911, and of the Christians at Kikuyu last year, together with those at Eccles, at Giggleswick, and perhaps a score of other places in England? Of Stanley's action, as you know, Archbishop Tait wrote: "I rejoice very heartily that so many of our countrymen at home, usually separated from us, are able to join us in this holy rite, as the inauguration of the solemn work they have in hand." And, in reference to the Hereford Communion, the present Archbishop said in Convocation "It would not be honest in me not to say that my own sympathies would go very far in that direction."

What is it, then, that holds us all back? Simply fear of the separatists, with their exclusive theory of apostolic succession. This theory is the last remaining barrier to practical Christianity, and we have no right to subordinate the interests of religion in England to the unfounded assumptions of those who hold this theory. We cannot, for the sake of to-day's peace with them, throw away our to-morrow for ever. In the mid-nineteenth century, these same separatists were not content merely to talk about their right to do this and that. They did it; and, as a result, after fifty or sixty years of doing it, practically the whole Church is uneasily subjected to their yoke. *Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

But, it may be said, our impulsive haste to make Christian charity and brotherliness the one thing needful will "rend the Church of England from top to bottom." Well, it would be better to rend it rather than to alienate it in spirit from the

majority of the lay people of England, to let it sink into an exclusive sacerdotalist sect, providing devotional opportunities for a small and dwindling section of the community. But, in fact, the threatened disruption will not come. Some of the more extreme among the clergy, and a few clerically-minded laymen, will secede, and make their peace with Rome, on Rome's own terms. We must take the risk of this, since the only alternative is the de-nationalizing of the Church, by our acquiescence in the uncompromising ascendancy of the separatists, and that, too, just at the time when their intellectual foundations have been shattered, and when their influence over thoughtful minds is admittedly on the wane.

Let us fairly face the fact that the clergy alone bar the way to Christian brotherhood. The laity have shown themselves almost everywhere favourable to religious fellowship. They are not, as a rule, interested in our theology, whether orthodox or heretical: but they are far more religiously-minded than we are inclined to admit. And they would welcome any move on the part of the clergy in the direction of practical Christianity. One of the most impressive features of our Hereford Communion was that all classes of lay people were represented. One saw, kneeling side by side, a churchwarden and a deacon of a chapel, a judge and a small shopkeeper, an alderman and a clerk, a squire and a farmer, a major in a line regiment (now with God; his body lies in Flanders), and a private in the Territorials. Neighbours, acquaintances, friends perhaps, in matters secular, they had been for years. But never before had they gathered in Christian fellowship round the Table of the Lord; and it was plain to see how earnestly thankful they were to have this privilege at last. There is clear local evidence, too, of the happier relationships which this union of spirit has produced in the common life of the city.

Our Bishops, assembled at the Lambeth Conference, have thrice repeated, at intervals of ten years, their exhortations to us to do all we can to encourage and strenghten the spirit of unity among all Christian people. And surely they know as

well as we do that there can be no true unity of spirit between Christian people who are not prepared to kneel together at the Lord's Table. So long as we fence that Table against those whom, at Edinburgh and elsewhere, we effusively call our Christian brethren, our professions of brotherhood have in them a taint of unreality; and we cannot be surprised if these brothers, so ambiguously Christian, call us insincere.

The late Canon Barnett, in thanking us for our action at Hereford, wrote:—

> "Perhaps the greatest need in our Church to-day is bravery. If only more people would *dare*, they would be surprised to find how many are on their side. Your action will show that many, many more are hurt by a policy of exclusion than by one of generosity."

There are two considerations only which might conceivably influence a modern Churchman against the idea of joint communion. First, a scruple as to the Confirmation rubric. This I need not dwell upon, since Professor Gwatkin has so convincingly shown that the rubric was never seriously understood as excluding Nonconformists till long after the rise of Tractarianism. Archbishops Tait and Maclagan considered that the rubric was not meant for Nonconformists. Bishop Creighton thought it was for our own people only, and said that Archbishop Benson agreed with him. So, too, Bishop Stubbs, and Wordsworth of Lincoln, the typical High Churchman of his time, who added the solemn reminder, "It is the Lord's Table, not ours." The rubric, then, is a purely domestic rule, and only by a resolutely unscrupulous separatist would a direction, intended to secure that Church of England children were Christianly brought up, be used as a weapon for unchristianly repelling pious Nonconformist Englishmen from the Lord's Table.

The second consideration which might make some of us hesitate is the question of reciprocity. It is not neighbourly to welcome friendly visits from those of another household, unless we are prepared to return the visit. Here, once again, the only question at issue is, What do you understand by a priest? Do you mean, without any qualification, an episcopally

ordained minister with apostolical succession? Or would you say (as I certainly should) that a "discreet and learned" old Nonconformist minister, with the experience of age and the ripe savour of a tried and faithful Christian life about him, could (save as a domestic matter of order and discipline) as validly preside at the supper of the Lord as some foolish young curate, full of the notion that he possesses, by apostolic succession, mysterious, quasi-magical powers denied to the saintliest of Nonconformists. Goodness only counts with God. And superstition, as William Wordsworth says, is that which tends to take something from goodness and to put something else in its place. But, however this may be, we must invite our Nonconformist brethren to our feast with our eyes open to the possibility of the invitation being returned.

One of the necessary results of the world-wide warfare in which we are now engaged, will surely be a wider realization of the things that really matter in religion. The furnace fire of battle will burn up much of the wood, hay, and stubble which we have built on the foundation of Christ. Already men are everywhere thinking more of the Sermon on the Mount and less of the Athanasian Creed; more of religion and less of theology. Those, in special, who have known brotherliness in the firing line, who have seen Pentecost in a wind-swayed tent in a muddy camp in Flanders, have learned, once and for all, that ecclesiastical divisions are the sin against the Holy Ghost. Even with us at home, in these last months, our sufferings and sacrifices have brought an uplifting influence into the national life, calling into active operation the higher elements of character, drawing together men of widely different opinions, strengthening the sense of unity and the spirit of comradeship. The flowing tide of knowledge and of good-will is irrevocably in the direction of Christian brotherhood. Are we, of the national church, to remain the only separatist element in the nation? the only body of Christian Englishmen who refuse to translate into definite concrete act the God-inspired longing after unity?

OUR NEED OF POWER.

By Rev. Hubert Handley, M.A.

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."—*Acts i.*, 8.

The other Movements have had power. Take two from the past of our own land.

(1) Fox's Journal breathes power; power breathes through it. You cannot read it without feeling the force, the impulse of life. "The power of God thundered amongst them," he writes, "and they flew like chaff before it;" there is power against opponents. Here is power against the temptations of the world; Cromwell bears witness and says:—"Now I see there is a people risen and come up that I cannot win either with gifts, honours, offices, or places; but all other sects I can." Here, again, is power to convert and elevate simple human lives, the single human soul: "O, happy George Fox!" cried his jailer at Derby, "that first breathed that breath of life within the walls of my habitation!" The Journal is full of power because it is full of the Holy Ghost. The early Quaker meetings glow with power because they glow with the Spirit. Ah! brothers and sisters, to want power is to want the Spirit; and to have the Spirit is to have power.

(2) Robert South represents not a conflicting but a complementary Movement. He stands for an ordered ministry, for a sacramental system, for the Catholic idea, which had never failed within the English Church from Elizabethan days, which had been cleansed with tragedy under Laud, and now had lifted up its head anew after the Puritan violence. And South's sermons breathe life; there is reality behind them. Perhaps his most marked gift is a masculine, biting irony—not the highest gift. In his disdain of Puritan hypocrisy he is superb. His pictures of the canting preacher are famous: "seasoned with twang and tautology," "a pert, empty, conceited hold-forth, whose chief interest is to vent his spiritual clack, and . . . . . to pray prizes." On the other hand, South's ideal

for the Anglican clergy is for ever fair. Not "full revenues, stately palaces, court interests." "But that which makes the clergy glorious is to be knowing in their profession, unspotted in their lives, active and laborious in their charges, daring to look vice in the face, ... gentle, courteous, compassionate to all." Our point, however, now is the *vigour* of South's sermons; they vibrate with confidence; they are thrown off from a living cause; there is something mighty within them; you feel running through them the energy of the Spirit.

Take now two Movements from our modern English life, from the eager activities of our own day, and see their power.

(1) There is the Labour Movement. Perhaps you are keenly aware of its defects, of its limitations in historical and economic learning, of its confined or twisted outlook, of its insistence on rights more than on duties, of its outbursts sometimes of envy or ill-temper. Yes. But if you had ever been present at one of its London meetings in the Queen's Hall, packed to the roof, Mr. Keir Hardie in the chair, and had felt the fervour, the electric enthusiasm of that comradeship, and had been impressed as the huge gathering rose and broke out into its song of battle and longing—

"England arise! the long, long night is over,"

you would have perceived that there was something *generous* in these men and their ideal, that in their rough efforts they were groping, stumbling, fumbling towards a humane, a righteous goal, that the Holy Ghost was in the room, and that the place shook with the power of the Spirit.

(2) Take, once more, the Movement which to-day is all about us for our good, which, ambient and blessed, is stirring the everyday Briton to daily heroism—the Movement of Imperial Patriotism. Have you read the epitaph of the Canadian who fell in Flanders? It was carved in rugged capitals on a rude wooden cross over his grave. Where did he come from? I do not know. From the Rocky Mountains? from Calgary? from Winnipeg? Did he sail under the heights of Quebec? up the mouth of the St. Lawrence? over the

wide Atlantic waters? to die for England in a foreign land? Something of that kind. And with a just inspiration—in lines almost equal to "Tom Bowling"—his comrades thus wrote up his memorial verse:—

> Poor old Bill he left this place
> With smokin' gun and smiling face;
> But Bill won't mind if some good chap
> Will follow up and fill the gap.

"If some good chap will follow up"—there is an apostolic succession. "But Bill won't mind"—there is the ancient and exalting surrender of the patriot; there whispers the inner and grand soul of our English race. Brothers and sisters, it is the very breathing—you can hear it—of the Spirit, and the power within it is Divine.

And what of *our* Movement? Our Movement—what is it? This Church of our fathers! Durham Cathedral, Canterbury Cathedral, the village church, the Bible, the Prayer-book, the quiet daily round of pastoral work—the little child admitted into Christ's Kingdom on earth, the marriage vow, the sick bed, the open grave, the occasions when, as Keble says, our Mother Church ministers to human souls with her wonderful soothing influence. This Church, this thing, this sacred thing—*is it to be a thing of the past or a thing of the present?* Intellectually, in its doctrinal statements, in its stammerings towards theological expression, in its adumbration of the eternal mysteries which it is sent to mediate to this great people—is our Church to be alive? or is it to be moribund? A profound, a supreme question. And we who strive for the vitality of English religion strive, humbly but resolutely, for a sublime, for an incomparable cause.

We need power. We need the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not something thin, theological, inhumane; not an ecclesiastical device; not bristling with exclusion and forbiddingness; not Dominican. The Spirit is here about us, free and immense, active in these leaves, these birds, those stars, sounding through the still sad music of humanity, through the pathos and nobility, the love and tears, the age-long

aspiring endeavour of the children of men. It is the Spirit of the Living God. And we in our weakness want His power; for our Movement to achieve its sacred purpose we must have His power.

How to receive the Holy Spirit? We may note three conditions.

(1) First and foremost we must put ourselves on sound relations with the Eternal. *Pone te primus in pace*, says the "Imitation," *et tunc poteris alios pacificare*. Put yourself first of all at peace with God, and then you can bring peace to others. Before everything else it comes—not doctrinal revision, not social reform, not amity and concord with other Christian bodies; no, not these essays first; first must be that this Society throw itself utterly, "sink or swim" as Bunyan said, on to the Divine Will; that it determinedly, constantly *pray*, use all spiritual exercises, petition, sacrament, devout reading, thanksgiving; that it put itself at the bed-rock, at the root of things, at the ultimate layers of being—that *there* it put itself *at peace with God;* then shall it bring in due time peace to the distracted ecclesiastical life of England.

(2) Secondly, we must be ready to suffer. They suffered in those other Movements, suffered for their cause. If we read the lives of the martyrs, early Christian martyrs or mediaeval, martyrs of the Reformation, martyrs of science and light, do we find in our own lives, in our own work for our Movement, anything even akin to their sacrifice, any affinity with their utter surrender? Yet suffering is a condition of power; the Spirit comes to quiet, unostentatious, humble, resolved sufferers. Brothers and sisters, there is a call to us; it sounds clear above the din, "if any man hear My voice"; there is a call to us that in time, in labour, in reputation, in money, we for our cause should suffer.

(3) Thirdly, we must hold together. In all the Movements there have been misunderstandings, entanglements, the danger of faction and discord, the strain which human wilfulness exerts on human patience. Brothers and sisters, we must hold together, forgiving and forgiven, and more and more will the Spirit visit us. If any members complain that this Churchmen's Union fails in its conception of sacramental worship, or

in its approach to Nonconformist brethren; if any members hold that the Union theologically is on the one hand too conservative, or on the other hand, too radical—I, as a sent messenger from this sacred place to-night, entreat such members, *Stay in the Union*. Stay in the Union and leaven it with that very leaven which the Holy Spirit works in your own heart and conscience; and our whole fellowship will be blessed by your continuance and fidelity. "And truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."

Finally, we have received power this week, and the Holy Ghost has come upon our Conference at Rugby. There can be no doubt about it. We have been in the Presence. We have been *aware* of it. Those papers read in the meeting hall, reverent and sincere, sent out light among us, beams, at least, of mental light, of trained observation, of rational accuracy, of religious science. Let there be light. It is an emanation from heavenly sources; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and the Spirit guides into all the truth. Again, our companionship this week has been sweet and uplifting; our association has glowed with something *good*. "Preserve it evermore by Thy help and goodness." It was the Spirit's goodness silently felt and effective. It has shewn itself particularly in numberless little acts of self-denial—especially among those faithful women who with a tender consideration have ministered in the Master's Name to our domestic wants—self-denial, the clue to many divine things. Once more, the Holy Ghost has come upon us in our morning and evening worship, Eucharist and Evensong, in God's House. We have spread out our needs, our embarrassments, our doubts, our plans, our sins, our joys, our thanks before the Eternal day by day. And the Eternal does not fail His children; there is something in the awful silences around us correlative to these cries for help; the heavens are sensitive; in ways we cannot measure responses come from out the depths of being to these human hearts turned toward their Maker; the Holy Ghost descends, and they receive power.

Let us thank the Giver of all good gifts. And then—the week vanishes and we scatter! back to the old home! back to our glorious task! back to a greater intent! Let us go on our way, humble and rejoicing, in the strength of the Lord God.

RELATIVE TRUTH.*

A Reply to the Rev. J. M. Thompson.

By the Rev. Canon SANDAY, D.D., D.Litt., F.B.A., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Oxford.

I was not at all surprised at Mr. J. M. Thompson's paper in the August number of the *Modern Churchman*. I did not know that Mr. Thompson in particular would take the line he does; but I knew that someone was sure to take it. And I am doubly grateful to him, both for expressing what will be in the minds of others and also for giving me the opportunity of returning to the subject of my original paper and of stating my case a little more fully.

The part of my "advice" to which Mr. Thompson takes exception is that in which I urged deliberate abstention from the "denial" of beliefs commonly held among Christians; or, as I ventured to put it, deliberate abstention from putting "nots" into the Creeds. It is to the criticism of this advice that I now ask leave to reply.

I.

I am free to confess that at a first, and even at a second reading, I failed to catch the full significance of Mr. Thompson's paper. It seemed to me to give an uncertain sound. Some parts of it seemed to be in trenchant antithesis to my views; but others, again, seemed practically to concede all that I asked for. In particular, towards the end of the paper, it was expressly laid down that "in a time of transition and purely as a temporary measure" the advice that I gave might reasonably be accepted and acted upon. If that were so, it seemed almost enough to point out that the period of transition contemplated was sure to be a long, and not a short one. It was sure to cover all that remained to me of life and probably most, if not all, that remained to Mr. Thompson. It might be true that we were beginning to see beyond the transitional period; but that was, in any case, the most that

* This Paper was not read at the Rugby Conference.

could be said. There is a group of reserved questions that may some day become actual. Chief among these is the Reunion of the Churches. When that enters into the field of practical politics, the Revision of the Creeds may enter along with it. That will be a time of final solutions; but, for the present, the kind of solutions with which we are concerned are all more or less provisional. It was distinctly such a state of things that I had in view myself; and it is hardly too much to claim that so far Mr. Thompson goes along with me.

II.

But the real question between us goes deeper than this. It is a question of presuppositions. And it was not clear how much of these presuppositions we held in common.

I had to ask myself what I knew of Mr. Thompson's attitude towards the Creeds. It is quite possible that he may have expressed himself more fully than I am aware. I looked through his book on the Miracles of the New Testament, and *Through Fact to Faith*, without finding anything decisive. But a more careful perusal of the article gives me, I think, sufficient to go upon.

The Creeds, as we have them, serve a double purpose. They are used in worship, as a profession of our common Christian belief, and they are also applied as a standard of doctrine. For each of these purposes, three distinct attitudes towards them are possible: (1) The attitude of simple acceptance; (2) That of acceptance in practice, combined with a certain amount of theoretical qualification or interpretation; (3) The attitude of disapproval so strong as to carry with it practical rejection. I gather from his paper that Mr. Thompson's view approaches more nearly to the third of these positions than to the second.

One is apt to assume that the Creeds have a fixed place in the Christian economy, and to adjust one's arguments and language to this assumption. I did this myself in the paper which Mr. Thompson criticizes. I took it for granted that the Creeds would continue to form a part of our common acts of worship, and that they would continue to serve as a bond of

continuity between the Church of the present and the Church of the past. But I understand that Mr. Thompson really challenges this assumption. He deals more especially with the public recitation of the Creeds. He expresses his agreement with me in my interpretation of the clause relating to the Virgin Birth, and then he adds:

> "If we are to go on saying the words at all, we can hardly give them any other meaning. But *ought* we to go on saying them in this sense?"

He then discusses, and partly rejects, the claim to "interpret" portions of the Creeds in a way that was not originally intended. I propose to come back to this discussion very shortly; but in the meantime I note a sufficiently explicit paragraph at the end of the essay:

> "In a time of transition, and purely as a temporary measure, a man may perhaps go on saying the Creed, whilst giving it a meaning which it was never meant to bear. But, if so, he must make clear what he is doing, and must work for the abolition of an intolerable servitude."

I was not at first quite sure what the "intolerable servitude" was. But it can hardly be anything else than the whole use of the Creeds.

This sense is confirmed by a sentence earlier in the essay.

> "It would seem, therefore, that to adopt this 'interpretation' is tolerable (if at all) only as a temporary expedient, until the clause is altered, or until we are released from the necessity of saying it."

There is a yet further corollary, which is not directly stated but appears to be tacitly inferred from this conclusion, viz., that, pending such alteration or such release, the individual is at liberty to deal with the Creeds just as he thinks fit, to affirm some clauses and deny others at his own will and pleasure.

This is the real principle which underlies Mr. Thompson's article, though it is rather strange that it nowhere finds direct expression.

Are we prepared to take our stand on this platform? Indeed, is it a platform at all within the range of practical politics? I greatly doubt it.

To agitate for the abolition of the Creeds would surely be the merest Quixotism. The Creeds can only be abolished or altered by the same authority by which they were introduced—

by a decision of the Univeral Church. But to obtain such a decision is, under present conditions, impossible. Something of the kind may lie in the lap of the distant future, but only when the conditions have been fundamentally changed.

And, in the meantime, the claim to have the right of denying just what one pleases is one that cannot be maintained. It may belong to the individual strictly as such; but it does not belong to him as a member, and still less as an officer or official, of the society. Mr. Thompson does not seem to consider his obligations in this relation quite so fully as they deserve. He speaks disparagingly of what he calls "officialism." And I am not quite sure what he means by this. His use of the word seems to waver between the privileges and the duties attaching to office. But in any case he seems to me to take these latter (the duties) too lightly. He seems inclined to take the privileges upon himself, and to throw the responsibilities, more than he ought, upon the society. This is what he says:—

> "If we regard ourselves simply as officials, representing a society, the answer is fairly easy. We are required, as officials, to read out official documents, and to perform official acts. It may rightly be presumed that we give these documents the meaning they were intended to express, and to attach to these acts the significance they are supposed to bear, unless we say anything to the contrary. But if we publicly claim to interpret them in a new way, and if the society does not thereupon disown us, our official honesty remains beyond reproach. The responsibility rests with the society."

The case that is being considered is that of divergence arising between the opinions of the individual and the recognized standards of the society. It seems to be assumed that, where this happens, the individual is to have his way all the same; provided that he makes his own mind clear, the society is to have nothing further to say, so long as it does not actually expel him.

This is, surely, rather hard measure upon the society. It is to bear the whole brunt, and he is to bear none. If it deals with him tenderly, its very tenderness is to be turned against it. Its indulgence in not requiring him to resign his offices is construed as a sanction given to views of which there is no doubt that the society at large does not approve. No allowance

is made—or at least none is expressed—for the reluctance which may attend the society's inaction. No doubt, in such cases, there will be every conceivable variety of circumstance and degree; and this may be understood, though the full bearing of it is not defined.

There is one rather obvious alternative which Mr. Thompson does not seem to take into account. We remember the old school motto: *aut disce, aut discede;* "learn the lessons, obey the rules—or go!" If the recalcitrant member finds the strain upon his conscience too great, the remedy is always in his own hands.

IV.

For the reasons which I have given I must needs regard Mr. Thompson's solution, or the course of action which he proposes as a solution, as impossible: in theory, it is untenable; and in practice it would mean simple anarchy.

As an alternative course, from a Modernist point of view, I have ventured to suggest my own—not that there is any novelty about it, unless it is in the one specific point of deprecating denials. Apart from Mr. Thompson and the ardent spirits who would agree with him, I suppose that the claim to the right of "interpreting" the Creeds might be taken as a commonplace of Modernism.

I understand that Mr. Thompson contests this—and contests it upon the grounds that the Creeds have but one sense, which is that originally intended. I might call the consequence which is drawn from this an argument from desperation. Mr. Thompson will not avail himself of the right to interpret the Creeds—or if he does so, does so only as a *pis aller*—not in order to fall back upon the traditional position, but rather in order to go forward and assert the right of unlimited and unqualified rejection. That, as I have said, seems to me to be going too far; it is asking for that which is in itself too much, and asking for more than we can expect to have granted.

But what is to be said of the claim to reconcile the Creeds with modern thought by a process of interpretation? Is this reasonable and tenable? I submit that it is.

In the first place it should be observed that a certain amount of interpretation is necessarily involved in any such process as that of accepting or assenting to the Creeds. To accept is to appropriate, to make one's own. But a proposition can only be made one's own in a certain sense; and that sense is put upon it in the act of assent or appropriation.

It will thus be seen that a certain amount of interpretation is involved from the outset. The only question is where this process is to stop. Mr. Thompson would, I suppose, confine it to the ascertainment of the meaning originally intended. It is part of what I have called his argument from desperation, to turn round upon his own side and ply against them the weapons of their opponents. He admits that some of the clauses of the Creed must be subject to interpretation; but he allows this only for the less important clauses, and not for the more important. He points out that "a good many orthodox Christians, who strongly object to the 'interpretation' of the words 'Born of the Virgin Mary,' themselves interpret 'Descended into Hell,' or 'The Resurrection of the Body,' in senses quite as far from the original meaning of the Creed." He defends those who do this from the charge of inconsistency; but, so far as I can see, only on the ground that the major clauses are "more essential" than the minor; he fails to substantiate any difference between the treatment of them in principle. I should certainly dispute the validity of this distinction. The real object with which it is made—in his case, if not in that of his temporary allies—is only to reduce the whole situation to an *impasse* from which there is no other exit than by putting "nots" into the Creed. That is, to say the least, a paradoxical way of proceeding.

The principle involved in the interpretation of the Creeds is like that which is called in law the principle of *cy près*. When, through the lapse of time and changed conditions it has become impossible to carry out the provisions of a trust literally as they stand, the legislature allows the application of the trust funds in the manner most nearly corresponding to the presumed

intentions of the founder. If looks away from the verbal directions contained in his will, which were adapted to the circumstances of his time, to the wider object which he had in view, and to the best means of attaining that object in accordance with the circumstances of the later time. The legislature places itself in the position of the founder, and does its best to carry out his wishes, as inferred from the terms of the trust, but as it were *mutatis mutandis*, with due regard to the changed conditions. It is a kind of appeal from the lesser intention, as determined by the circumstances of the moment, to the larger intention as determined by more permanent needs and the more efficient provision for them.

Mr. Thompson rather begs the question when he insists upon confining the meaning of the Creeds to the superficial sense of the ideas current at the time when they were composed, and shuts out any appeal to the larger truths which expressed themselves at different times in different ways.

The essential truth of the Incarnation is the manifestation of Deity in human form. It is natural and right that we should think of that manifestation as surrounded with every circumstance of holiness; but the mode of envisaging these circumstances of holiness may reasonably vary from age to age.

V.

It was in view of these conditions that I ventured to lay stress upon the conception of "relative truth." Mr. Thompson, somewhat airily, waves this aside. "There is little force," he says, "in this phrase 'relative truth.'" And it is doubtless true that he has little use for it, and that it holds but a small place in his philosophy. His manner seems to be to isolate a particular point, to concentrate a strong light upon it, and to press it to all its logical consequences. I will not say that this is not an appropriate method in dealing with some kinds of subject-matter, such as mathematics and (in another way) physical science. But our concern is with the spirit world, and with the apprehension of that world by the human mind. The history of this is the history of an age-long process. It is the

history of the working out of a great Divine Purpose, in which the Spirit of God comes down to meet the spirit of man. The impulse and guidance come from above, but the effort and aspiration—the straining after expression—comes from below. The process passes through a number of successive phases. In the study and assimilation of these phases, the idea of "relative truth," assumes very different proportions. In the realm of human speculation—even of God-guided speculation—and in the realm of human practice, what truths are there that are not relative? They are always relative to the minds in which they take shape, and to the circumstances by which they are moulded.

The process of which I have been speaking is neither wholly subjective nor wholly objective; it is neither wholly fixed and permanent nor wholly subject to flux and change. There are permanent elements in it, and changing elements; and we have to take account of both, and of both at once.

We have to think of this process as spread out before our view, as we might conceive it spread out in the sight of God. Our effort is to see it as it really is, and to describe it as it really is. But we cannot do this without bringing in at once the idea of permanence and the idea of relativity. Mr. Thompson makes play with an epigram in which he banters me with regarding the Creeds as the "changing expressions of an unchanging faith," whereas they are really, in his view, "the unchanging expressions of a changing faith." It suits his purpose to describe them thus, in order that he may reduce the whole situation to a deadlock, and so get rid of them altogether. I hope that I am not doing him an injustice in this; but I cannot interpret the language that he uses in any other way. It seems to me that I am justified in the view that I take of the Creeds, because by the nature of the case it cannot be otherwise. The broad truths which they express are permanent and unchanging. But each successive generation, in the act of appropriating and assimilating them, is compelled to re-state them to itself, tacitly or explicitly, in the terms of its own thought. Each successive generation does its best to find the

nearest equivalents that it can in language that it can spontaneously use and understand. In this way, by looking intently at the object to be expressed, both in its first presentation, and in subsequent presentations, it is able not to lose the original meaning while adapting it to changed conditions. On both sides it is liable to failure; it may either lose more than it ought of the original meaning, or its adaptation of the old truth to the new conditions may be imperfect. But at least that is the ideal. The scribe who is instructed for the kingdom of heaven, brings out of his treasures things that are at once new and old.

It is this conjunction of the new with the old that makes the conception of "relative truth" so indispensable. It is the only way in which we can rightly describe and characterize forms of expression which, at one time adequate and satisfying, have by degrees been outgrown. If we insist on still calling them true, we encourage the confusion of absolute truth with relative. If, on the other hand, we insist (as Mr. Thompson would have us insist) on dismissing them as *un*true, we say more than we mean, or at least more than we ought to mean; and we commit, what I should call, an act of violence and impiety towards the past.

In the old logical terminology there is a fallacy which bears the name *a dicto secundum quid ad dictum simpliciter*. It seems to me that Mr. Thompson runs great risk of involving himself in this fallacy, and indeed that his whole way of thinking is very much exposed to it.

And at the same time, by what I must needs think his extreme views in regard to the Creeds, he involves himself in consequences which to me would seem insupportable.

VI.

The Creeds are the great guarantee of continuity between the Church of the early centuries and the Church of to-day; they are the one remaining link between separated communions. So long as this link remains, the separation is incomplete: so long as it remains there is a sub-consciousness of unity underlying all that makes for division. It is for these reasons

that the Creeds are cherished by the Churches, and that individual Christians desire to keep their hold upon them.

But how can that hold continue, if every free-lance considers himself at liberty to deny what Christians all around him are asserting? Can it be a light matter to cut oneself off from the communion of the faithful by one's own act and deed? Does it involve no pang of conscience to sever the ties which bind us to the Church of the past, and to the fellowship of believers throughout the world?

The advice I ventured to give I gave because it seemed to leave the sense of loyalty to the Church unimpaired. It was consistent with the full affirmation of all the central verities of of the Christian religion. It left untouched the feeling of *idem velle et idem nolle*, which is the true sense and bond of union. This whole attitude, I would claim, is at once loyal and sincere. It is an attitude of pious recognition towards the past. It can say—and say from the heart—"This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." And at the same time, it states its own belief frankly in modern terms.

The position opposed to this takes up a single scruple, which is in the end verbal rather than real, and rides it so hard as to sacrifice weightier matters to it.

If it is open to Mr. Thompson to say of the course which I recommend, "That way lies hypocrisy;" it is open to us to say in return, "That way lies fanaticism." There are dangers both ways. We are on our guard against hyprocrisy. We say what we think openly and candidly (but not obtrusively), and we put forward a reasoned vindication of it. But is our critic equally on his guard against the dangers of fanaticism? It is surely, just in a like isolated and narrow assertion of a single plausible proposition—in the insistence upon "No" where "No" is not required—that the root is to be found of all the historic heresies and schisms.

The truth is that every possible course is open to objections for those who feel that they can no longer endorse the old

Creeds precisely in the old way. It is some consolation to reflect that no one—even the most orthodox can really do this. Not even the most orthodox understand the Descent into Hell or the Resurrection of the Body in the literal sense in which those who inserted these clauses in the Creed understood them. And, when once that is conceded, the whole principle of literally identical transmission breaks down. I do not think that I spoke too strongly when I described this idea of literally identical transmission as contrary to the nature of things.

But if that position is given up, no perfectly natural and logical resting-place remains, short of a complete revision of the Christian Creed by the Church of Christ as a whole—the Catholic Church at the moment when it becomes once again a Catholic Church indeed.

If I propose to draw the line where I do, it is not under any delusion that by doing so we escape all difficulties and all objections. It is only because I believe that in this way we preserve the maximum of positive truth with the minimum accretion of error; and that we at the same time maintain an attitude of mind which is based upon fundamental veracity, and yet avoids the opposite extremes of "voluntary" (*i.e.*, forced and not more than half sincere) humility, and of self-will.

It has not been possible to find space in this number of the *Modern Churchman* for all the papers read at the Rugby Conference, the remaining papers by Miss Emery, Mr. W. Gordon, Canon Cremer, and the Revs. R. G. Parsons and H. D. A. Major will be included in our next issue.—Ed. *M.C.*